

The Congregationalist.

JANUARY, 1877.

ON SOME PRESENT ASPECTS OF THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT AMONG CONGREGATIONALISTS.*

THE subject which I have undertaken to discuss is one of extreme difficulty. The materials for forming a judgment upon it are not easily accessible. Congregationalists publish very few theological books; and the theological books which they publish afford no trustworthy indications of the common creed of Congregational Churches. For among us I think that men seldom write on any theological subject except they imagine that they have something to say which is not generally believed or not generally understood; and, if this is a correct impression, the theological publications which bear the names of Congregational authors do not assist us—except indirectly—in discovering the present aspects of theological thought among Congregationalists; they indicate what, in the judgment of individual writers, are the truths which Congregational Churches apprehend imperfectly or reject altogether. And the people in our Churches that buy theological books are for the most part persons of intellectual curiosity. Tell them that any book contains a strong and able statement and illustration of their own theological position, and it is probable that they will refuse to purchase it; tell them that it contains some new and bold and ingenious theological speculations, and they will purchase it at once.

No doubt there are earnest and zealous men scattered over the country who do their best to promote the circulation of books and

* This paper was read at the last annual Conference of the Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and South Staffordshire County Unions. The Conference was held at Coventry, November 21st, 1876. A few notes are given, indicating the judgment of various speakers on some of the more important subjects discussed in the paper.

pamphlets which are written in defence of the doctrines which form the heart of the Evangelical creed ; but their very earnestness implies that, in their judgment, these doctrines are in some danger of being renounced.

And yet it is not quite safe to assume that the theological books which are published by Congregationalists are a certain indication of what Congregationalists generally do not believe ; for the writers of these books sometimes discover, to their surprise, that there is far less of originality in their speculations than they had supposed. Nor is it quite safe to assume that the doctrines defended in the books and pamphlets which good men are zealous in circulating are really in peril ; the fears of the best and the wisest men are sometimes unfounded.

I have undertaken to write this paper, not because I am quite sure about the present aspects of theological thought in our Churches, but because I want to receive from you the information which you are able to give me on the subject. I can tell you what I think ; you can tell me what you think. You can also tell me what the people are thinking who belong to the Churches which you represent. About the theological position of the Congregationalists of these three counties we ought to be able this morning to come to some clear and definite conclusion.

There is a sense, perhaps, in which it may be said that large numbers of Congregationalists are without a theology. If, indeed, I may trust the judgment I have formed from a tolerably extensive acquaintance with Congregational ministers and Churches in nearly all parts of England, there are certain great doctrines which are held firmly.

That there is one God, who is known to us as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ; that these distinctions in the Godhead are what, for want of a better word, we must call "personal ;" that the Son became incarnate in the Lord Jesus Christ ; that He came into the world in order that men might receive remission of sins and eternal glory ; that to those who know the Gospel, faith in Christ is the condition of the forgiveness of sins and of participation in the divine life ; that without the new birth it is impossible to be saved ; that we are sanctified by the Holy Ghost ; that we shall be judged by works ;—these are truths which I believe are preached from all Congregational pulpits, and regarded as certain by the members of Congregational Churches. Whatever divergencies of faith exist among us lie within these lines. But I think it probable that even the truths which are universally acknowledged are not organised into a scientific and coherent system ; they have their firmest root in our religious life ; they are verified one by one ; they are not the

separate parts of a great theory of the relations of the human race to God.

Of course I am speaking, not of theological professors or of accomplished theologians who hold no theological chair, but of our ministers and Churches generally; and, if my impression is accurate, we have no theological system in the sense in which Calvinism was the theological system of most of the Puritans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It may be doubted whether for a long time to come any such system is likely to be constructed that will secure the universal adhesion of Congregationalists. What may be described as the Congregational theological tradition has been broken. We have no longer a common theological life. The theological influences under which we have been trained have been extremely various.

During the last fifty years large numbers of men have entered our ministry—and many of them have been among the ablest and most effective of our ministers—who were educated in Presbyterianism. Their theology was formed on the model of the Confession and the Catechism of the Westminster Assembly. During the last thirty years our ministry has received frequent accessions from Methodism. Not only is the Methodist theology the strong antagonist of Calvinism, but Methodist traditions are altogether unlike the traditions of Scotch Presbyterianism. Wales, again, has sent us ministers who, by the characteristic type of their religious life as well as by their characteristic eloquence, have had a very important influence not only on our style of preaching, but on our whole conception of religious truth. We have also received not a few ministers from Ireland. The English Congregational ministry is not English, nor is it Congregational: we are Scotchmen, Welshmen, and Irishmen; we are Presbyterians and Methodists. Even those of us who are the children of English Congregationalists had for our ministers men who were born Presbyterians, and who were educated in Scotch universities; or men who first learnt to fear God and trust in Christ from the travelling preachers of Methodism, and received their early religious training in the class-meeting; or men who inherited the religious belief of the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales, and whose ideal of preaching was formed by the glorious eloquence of John Elias, Christmas Evans, or Williams of Wern; or men who thought and preached with all the glow of Irish fervour. And if our minister was an Englishman and a Congregationalist, educated at an English Congregational College, the chances are ten to one that he had for a tutor a Scotchman, whose earliest associations were connected with the controversies between burghers and anti-burghers; or a Welshman, to whom the genuine historical type of English Congregationalism seemed a little formal and very cold. I do not say that we are the

worse for the variety of influences which have contributed to ~~form~~ the present ministry of our Churches—we are greatly ~~the~~ better; but the historical type has been lost.

Further, ever since the beginning of the century, our Churches have been receiving into membership crowds of persons who were unfamiliar with the traditions of Congregationalism: Scotchmen, and men from the north of Ireland who had no Presbyterian church within reach; Welshmen who came to us because there was no Calvinistic Methodist church nearer to them than a hundred miles; young men and young women who had been confirmed by bishops, and who had learnt the Church Catechism in their childhood; and an enormous number of people who, till they entered our Sunday-schools, or came on a wet Sunday night into our chapels, were utterly irreligious—the children of profane and drunken parents—and, till they received our teaching, as ignorant of the simplest truths of the Gospel as any heathen man. I imagine that in all our Churches in the large towns, and perhaps in very many of our Churches in the smaller towns, hereditary Congregationalists form an insignificant minority of our Church members.*

The growth of our Churches has been so rapid that it would have been difficult to impress upon them a distinctive type of theological thought, even if we had tried to do it. But we have not tried; and our principal strength has been spent in increasing our numbers, rather than in subjecting those whom we have received to any definite and consistent theological discipline. We have long abandoned the use of theological catechisms in our families and schools. Nor have we created a distinct literature, to mould and to colour the theological thought of our people. Our ablest and most accomplished ministers have been so absorbed in their ministerial work that they have written very few books; and, as the result of many causes which I cannot stay to analyse, there is a disposition to under-estimate the value of books produced by our own men. We have rather prided ourselves on the catholicity of our tastes, and have disparaged our denominational literature. The theological books which our ministers and people have read most, have therefore been the books of writers belonging to other Churches. Coleridge and Maurice and Jowett; John Henry Newman and Dr. Pusey; Alford, Trench, Westcott, and Lightfoot; Dr. Bushnell and some other American authors; the great German theologians and commentators—especially those that have been translated by Clark—have exerted a very powerful influence on many of our ministers; and

* A Warwickshire minister suggested that the original type of Independency—the type which asserted its strength in the Commonwealth times—was first modified by the accessions Independency received from the Presbyterians after the ejection of 1662.

the lives and writings of the school of fervid Scotch authors, represented by M'Cheyne, Macduff, and the Bonars, have been largely read by the people. Both ministers and people—but especially the ministers—have also felt the force of the great wave of thought which has broken upon Christendom during the last twenty or thirty years, and which has threatened to sweep away all faith in the moral freedom of man and in the existence of a living and personal God. Mr. John Stuart Mill, Mr. Herbert Spencer, and Auguste Comte have been read by many of us; and the readers of the more popular books which are penetrated by the spirit of the new philosophy have been still more numerous. The result has been rather chaotic. I hardly know which set of influences has produced the deepest and most decisive impressions.

If I have dwelt at what appears an unnecessary length on the causes which have led to our present theological position, it has been with the intention of reminding you that the theology of Congregationalists is, to a large extent, not the creation of Congregationalism. We have lost our old traditions, and they are now irrecoverable. Many generations must pass before new traditions, of equal authority with the old, can come into existence. There are many among us who are satisfied with the variety and freedom of our present condition, and who have no desire that Congregationalism should be identified with any particular theological method, or with any more uniform system of theological faith, than that which now prevails.

I have also wished to show that the tide of our theological thought is broken by so many currents, that there is some difficulty in determining how it is flowing. The statements of this paper must therefore be taken with large qualifications.

Among the present aspects of our theological thought, perhaps none is more obvious than the general disappearance of Calvinism. I have no doubt that there are many Congregationalists who think that they are Calvinists. This was the impression of Mr. Angell James. He said to me once, with great energy—raising his arm and clenching his hand as he said it—"I hold the doctrines of Calvinism with a firm grasp!" "But," said I, "you never preach about them." "Well," he replied—with the *naïveté* which was one of the chief charms of his character—"you know that there is not much about them in the Bible." I am not sure that every minister who claims to be a Calvinist would explain with such beautiful simplicity his reasons for not preaching about the Divine decrees, about election, and about the perseverance of the saints; but some explanation is necessary. Bees are said to have a very ingenious way of dealing with a fellow-citizen that happens to die in the hive; they leave the dead body where it lies, but seal up the cell with wax.

Our modern Calvinists treat Calvinistic doctrine very much in the same way. The doctrine is allowed to remain in their creed undisturbed ; but, to keep their creed quite sweet and wholesome, the cell in which their Calvinism lies is hermetically sealed.

But there is something more than the mere absence of definite Calvinistic teaching which I think deserves notice. The spirit of Calvinism has gone ; our faith has lost a certain grandeur, solemnity, and majesty, which belonged to the Augustinian and Calvinistic theology. That theology had its noble elements, and these have almost vanished. To Calvinism in the time of its strength God was very great. His august authority dominated the whole spiritual and intellectual life of men, filled the imagination, received the homage of the conscience, inspired the heart with awe, commanded a faith which gave men the strength of heroes, so that they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. God was so great that men were able to trust Him, and were afraid to cross His will and break His laws.

This sense of God's greatness was the spiritual root of the theology of Augustine and of Calvin. To the men who had been formed by that theology, man was nothing, God everything. And this enabled them to bear the awful strain of the severe doctrines of their creed. Their creed made them strong by the tremendous demands which it made on their strength. The creed has gone—gone partly as the result of applying sounder principles of exegesis to the study of Holy Scripture, but partly from other causes. For a long time past the Church has had to maintain a fierce conflict with a necessitarian and materialistic philosophy—a philosophy which might be roughly described as Calvinism without a God. The weapons which we have been obliged to use in this conflict are fatal to the Calvinistic theology. One of the principal positions for which we have had to contend—the key, indeed, of the whole position—is the freedom of the human will ; and this the philosophy of Calvinism denies. In this controversy we have had to make much of man ; Calvinism made very little of him. But perhaps the principal cause of the decay of Calvinistic theology has been a diminished sense of the Divine greatness. The system began to die at the roots. The iron bands of logic which seemed its strength were not its real strength. Its real life and vigour came from the profoundest depths of the religious life. Augustinian theology was never really strong in the Roman Church, except in times when religious earnestness was intense. Calvinism began to decline when the masculine strength and religious depth of the first three generations of Protestantism began to disappear. It was held up and held together for a long time by the

authority of great names, by confessions, by catechisms, by painful and laborious argument; it has gathered strength again in England, in Scotland, in America, and in some parts of Continental Europe, when there has been a renewal of religious earnestness; but, as a theory of the relations between God and man, it has never recovered from the injuries which it received during the times in which it was a mere theory and not the expression of a profound awe in the presence of the tremendous majesty of God.*

This awe we, I am afraid, have lost. I do not mean, of course, that we have lost it altogether, or that there are no hearts which in the Divine presence are penetrated with devout fear, as well as with perfect trust and joy; but I mean that it has ceased to hold a very great place in our religious life and thought. If we could have the Calvinistic spirit without the Calvinistic creed, it would be the regeneration of the Church and the salvation of the world.

God's authority does not impress us as it should. We find it hard to make men feel—whatever they may say—that sin is an awful offence, because committed against Him.

Take, for instance, our way of thinking and speaking about moral duties. I hope that there are far more sermons preached on common morality just now than there were thirty years ago. But is there no tendency in our moral preaching to drift into mere paganism—to appeal merely to men's self-respect, to their honour, to their just and generous instincts, to the interests and claims of society? Do we not endeavour to get them to do right by the use of irony and satire, and by trying to make them ashamed of their meanness and trickery? If we want to cure men of drunkenness, do we not dwell on the great physical and intellectual injury which they inflict on themselves by their excesses, on the wrongs they inflict upon their families and their descendants, on the waste of money and the ruin of character which are the certain results of their vice? If we want to make men industrious, do we not think that our strongest motives are to be drawn from the wealth and social position and opportunities of intellectual enjoyment which their industry will win for them? I do not mean to imply that these arguments and appeals are illegitimate. I would fight Vice with both hands; I would use every force, human and divine, to get men to cease to do evil and learn to do well. But, if nearly all that we say on purely moral duties might be said by a man having no belief in God or in God's government of the world, one of two things is perfectly plain—either we ourselves think very little of God's authority, or else we

* A Worcestershire minister thought that the tenderness of our present thought about God is far better than that mere sense of God's "vastness" which he thought was once too common.

suppose that God's authority counts for nothing with the people to whom we are speaking. And even this is not a complete and honest statement of the case. If God's authority filled our own hearts with awe—if we had a great dread of His displeasure—we should insist on His authority, whether we supposed men revered it or not; and we should warn them against His anger, whether we supposed that they feared it or not.

For a long time past I think that our minds have been filled with the idea of an easy, good-natured God. What is called Natural Theology has to answer largely for this. The Argument from Design has been so handled, the appeal to the arrangements of the material universe as illustrating the Divine beneficence has been urged so constantly, and, as I venture to think, so inconsiderately, that some of us have come to think of God as though it were His chief function to provide for the physical comfort of His creatures, and especially of the human race. There has been a sentimental habit of looking on the laws of the universe only under their gentler and kindlier aspects. In the notes of a youthful sermon of mine, which I happened to be reading the other day, I found the following passage, which when I wrote it I no doubt thought very pretty: "All beauty," I said, "is but the vesture in which Law clothes herself. By her fingers are interwoven the bright harmonies of the rainbow; she gives grace to the harebell, perfume to the violet, to the lily her shining raiment, to the rose her blushing beauty. The strong, firm pulse, the radiant eye, the cool brain, the clear intellect, are among her gifts," and so forth. You can see that this is very "juvenile."

Of course it is true as far as it goes; but the mischief is that it goes such a very little way. There was just a hint in the sermon about storms, earthquakes, and volcanoes, with which law has also a great deal to do; but they were lightly put aside, as though they were of very inconsiderable importance; and my pet illustrations of the power of Law were, as I have told you, the rainbow and the harebell, and the violet, and the lily, and the "blushing beauty" of the rose. I may be wrong, but I think that this sentimental way of dealing with the universe has not been uncommon. That the creation has been made subject to "vanity," that "the bondage of corruption" is upon all things, we have been unwilling to remember. We have shrunk from facing the sterner, gloomier, more tragic aspects, both of human life and of the external world. This effeminacy is of a piece with our inability to endure the thought of the infinite greatness of God, and the awful majesty of His moral authority.

I find the influence of the same moral and spiritual defect when I come to the consideration of a certain way of thinking of our Lord Jesus

Christ. For thirty years, at least, there has been a tendency to dwell too exclusively on the human aspects of His character and history. That He was the Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, we all confess. There is no faltering in the faith with which we acknowledge Him as "the brightness of the Father's glory," and the Creator of all things. But while the faith remains, I have some fear that the reverence which ought to go with it is often absent. The most Evangelical people among us—those who hold Evangelical doctrine in its extreme form—seem to me to be especially wanting in reverence for Christ. There is a fondling familiarity in their way of speaking about Him, which would be impossible, if they saw His glory. For the glory of Christ is not an artificial and factitious glory—a glory of titles, decorations, crowns, and thrones. It is the glory of personal greatness, of unique and supreme authority, of perfect holiness, of a love so sublime that there are hours when it makes us tremble with wonder, while it inspires perfect trust.

Among some of those to whom the effeminate fondness with which extreme Evangelicals speak of our Lord Jesus Christ is most offensive, a defective reverence for Christ shows itself in other ways. They are very earnest in asserting the doctrine of the Incarnation; but the human life of our Lord is so real to them—their imagination is so filled with the obscurity of His earthly parentage, the meanness of His external condition, His poverty, His participation in all the common infirmities of human nature, His hunger and thirst, and His physical weariness, the reality of His temptation, the tenderness of His human affection for His friends, and of His human compassion for sorrow and pain, the agony of His conflict in the garden, and the intensity of His suffering on the cross—that their sense of His divinity is overpowered. It is hardly too much to say that they know Christ after the flesh; they know Him as Peter and James knew Him before His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God. To them He is the great Friend of the poor, the wretched, and the sinful. He came to seek and to save that which is lost. His sympathy with us in trouble may always be relied upon. But He is our Brother only; He is hardly our Lord. He is our Saviour only; He is hardly our Prince. Their gospel wants the very foundation on which our Lord Himself rested His great and final commission to the apostles: "All authority is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations." But the real power of the Gospel over the consciences of men will never be exerted where the authority of Christ is not vividly apprehended and earnestly maintained. Nor can there be any intelligent trust in Christ for the forgiveness of sin where He is not recognised as the Moral Ruler of the race. Unless men feel that the law of which sin is the transgression is the law of Christ, they cannot trust Christ to pardon them.

The subject on which I should be most grateful to receive information from the Conference, is the extent to which there has been a surrender of the substance of the orthodox and Evangelical doctrine of the Atonement. That the form in which the doctrine is now held differs materially from the form in which it was commonly held fifty years ago, is, I suppose, unquestionable. What is known as the commercial view is abandoned. If anyone ever believed that our Lord Jesus Christ endured precisely that amount of suffering, which would be deserved by the sins that were to receive forgiveness on the ground of His Death, that extraordinary method of estimating the value of the Atonement has, I imagine, been universally given up.* Theories less repugnant to the moral sense—to which from the nature of the case the Atonement must necessarily appeal—have also been largely surrendered. There are many Congregational ministers, and many members of Congregational Churches, to whom, I believe, it seems impossible to discover even the rudiments of any theory of the relations between the Death of Christ and the forgiveness of sin. But are there any considerable number either of ministers or Church members, to whom the Death of Christ has ceased to be surrounded by any exceptional mystery, and who regard it as being nothing more than the tragic close and climax of the sufferings necessarily involved in His Incarnation? Or to put the question differently, Are there many who acknowledge no direct relation between the Death of Christ and the forgiveness of sins, and who believe that His Death was only God's last and most pathetic appeal to the human heart, the strongest assurance of the intensity of His love, the supreme proof of how much He was willing to suffer for us? †

That the Death of Christ was the great demonstration of the Divine love for mankind, is of course earnestly maintained by those who assert that this love was manifested in sending Christ to be the propitiation for our sins, and that in the greatness of His love Christ died for us because His Death was necessary for the forgiveness of our sins. I

* A Warwickshire minister said that "many still hold the commercial view of the Atonement;" but that "few have any theory at all." The same minister censured "the soft, luscious way of speaking of the Divine Fatherhood," "the shrinking from the assertion of the Divine Authority," the insisting on "the beauty of holiness to the neglect of its rightness" with which some are chargeable. A South Staffordshire minister thought that the absence of a theory of the Atonement is not to be regretted.

† A South Staffordshire minister affirmed that people are "not restless about the doctrine of the Atonement," but that there is great restlessness about the doctrine of Future Punishment. A Worcestershire minister thought that in reference to the Atonement, "the pendulum of theological thought had swung in some cases to the farthest point from the position maintained by our fathers. The 'Moral theory' contains truth which was not sufficiently recognised fifty years ago."

have very seldom been more astonished than by a statement made at Bradford by an excellent friend of mine, that in the Congregational Union Lecture I said that "we must choose between the legal and moral aspects of the Atonement, and cannot have them both." So far as I can learn, the only passage which can be quoted in support of this statement, is one that occurs in the Introductory Lecture, where I say: "The fundamental question, Whether the Death of Christ has a direct relation to the remission of sins, or whether it was simply a great appeal of the Divine love to the human race—God's method of conquering the human heart—determines the whole attitude of the Christian soul to Christ. One of these two conceptions we must accept, one we must reject, not merely as theologians, but as Christians." But suppose I were to say that, "Whether Christ requires us to live a pure and righteous life, and to discharge all moral duties as part of the service we owe to Him, or whether He simply requires us to pray to God and read the Scriptures, determines our whole theory of the Christian life: one of these two conceptions we must accept, one we must reject, not merely as theologians but as Christians," would anyone suppose I intended to maintain that Christ requires nothing more than practical morality, and that I denied that He requires us to pray to God, and to meditate on Divine truth? And yet this supposition would be just as reasonable as the interpretation imposed at Bradford on the passage I have quoted from the Lectures on the Atonement.

The two conceptions—one of which I say we must accept, one of which we must reject—are these: (1) That the Death of Christ has a direct relation to the remission of sins. (2) That it was *simply* a great appeal of the Divine love to the human race; an appeal of the Divine love to the human race—*nothing more*. That a very intelligent man should have supposed that I, or anyone else, could maintain that the Death of Christ is not the most wonderful manifestation of the love of God, the great appeal of the love of God to the human heart, and should suppose that I wrote a book of five hundred pages in support of this astounding proposition, is a singular illustration of the possible eccentricities of a cultivated intellect. To me it suggests the necessity of exercising the greatest caution in forming any judgment on the opinions of men from whom I differ. If my friend could form so remarkable a misconception of my meaning, I must be in great danger myself of misapprehending the meaning of other people.

But this is a digression. There can be no doubt, I suppose, that the writings of Dr. Bushnell, and of Dr. Young, and of some eminent Broad Churchmen, have produced a considerable impression on our theological thought. Dr. Macleod Campbell's treatise on the Atonement, one of the noblest and profoundest of modern theological works, not-

withstanding what appear to me to be its deficiencies, must have exerted a still more powerful influence.

Dr. Macleod Campbell, indeed, recognises a certain objective element in our Lord's work ; but I doubt whether his theory that our Lord's confession of human sin—which amounts almost to a theory of vicarious repentance—appears more satisfactory to most of his readers than the various theories of vicarious suffering which he has criticised in the earlier part of his volume with a logic which seems to me absolutely irresistible. The general effect of his book must be, I think, altogether hostile to the conception of an objective Atonement.

I venture to ask those who have been driven from the old Evangelical position, to remember that their dissatisfaction with the theories by which theologians have endeavoured to illustrate the direct relation between the Death of Christ and the forgiveness of sin, is no adequate reason for refusing to recognise the reality and awful significance of that relation. The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not a theory of the Divine government which we have constructed out of our own heads ; it is a supernatural revelation, and its contents are to be learned from the life and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, and from the writings of the Apostles.

Nor is it anything to the purpose to allege that there are many passages in the New Testament in which the Death of Christ is described as the great proof of the love of God ; and many passages in which the Death of Christ is appealed to as the most powerful argument for loyalty to the throne of Christ and obedience to His will ; and many passages in which it is affirmed that there is a mystical but real relation between the Death of Christ and our death unto sin. These great truths are maintained as earnestly by those who acknowledge as by those who deny the expiatory power of the Death of Christ. The question at issue is a very simple one—Is the Death of Christ represented in the New Testament as the ground on which God grants us remission of sin ; or is it intended exclusively to produce a moral effect in ourselves, to remove our distrust of God, and inspire us with faith in His love ? We may be quite unable to discover why the Death of Christ should be the ground on which God forgives us, but if this is the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles, we are bound to accept the fact, and to give it a great place in our preaching.

I do not believe that any considerable number of Congregational ministers, or any considerable number of the members of Congregational Churches, have lost their hold of this truth ; I believe that during the last ten years it has been preached by large numbers of us with a new energy of faith and with a new fervour of earnestness. But whether in the creed and in the preaching of some of those who hold

the truth firmly, it has that great place which it rightly claims, is a question which there are grounds for asking with some anxiety. The uneasiness, restlessness, and apprehension in relation to this truth, of which there are frequent indications among the elder members of our Churches, must have some cause. It may be occasioned partly by the mere disuse of those crude and unsatisfactory explanations of the Atonement to which they were accustomed in their earlier years; partly by the hostility and scorn with which these explanations are sometimes spoken of by men who have nothing better to put in their place, and who, while holding fast to the fact that the Death of Christ is the ground on which God forgives us, have not seen their way to any explanation of the fact. But I believe that the principal cause of uneasiness is to be found in the secondary position to which the truth is sometimes relegated. A man who believes in the Atonement of Christ ought to feel that there must be something gravely wrong in his preaching, if there is any question among his congregation as to whether he believes in it or not. A mere distant and occasional recognition of a certain mysterious connection between the Death of Christ and the remission of sins, ought not to satisfy us. This truth—if it be a truth at all—is a truth of such magnitude that it ought to penetrate and inspire our whole religious thought and life.

There is only one other subject on which I wish to speak: I mean the future destiny of the impenitent. It is possible, and even probable, that I may exaggerate the extent to which the doctrine of eternal suffering has been given up; but it is my impression that the pulpits in which it is preached are comparatively few. Some men who contend in private that the doctrine is taught in the New Testament, say nothing about it in public; and I believe that a still larger number of men have come to the conclusion that the doctrine is untenable, though they are dissatisfied with the theories which are offered in its place. The divisions of opinion on this subject are very wide and very grave.

There are, first of all, the men of whom I have just spoken, who say that they can form no judgment on the question at all. They cannot warn men against eternal condemnation, because they are not sure that any man will be eternally condemned. Nor, on the other hand, are they sure that all men will be eternally saved. They are not clear that those who die impenitent will be irrecoverably lost; they are not clear that it will be possible for them to repent on the other side of Death; their minds are in a state of absolute suspense.

There are, secondly, those who are clear that there is a terrible destiny for the impenitent, and who acknowledge that, as far as God has revealed His thought, there is no hope of their ultimate redemption.

But they argue that Divine revelation has been a succession of wonderful surprises. To take their own illustration : God warned Adam that death would be the penalty of his sin, and told him nothing of the possibility of redemption. The truth which God reveals is not intended to satisfy and suppress all speculation, but to give us practical guidance. The impenitent are to be condemned ; they are to suffer ; but there may be some transcendent manifestation of the Divine grace in reserve, of which as yet we have no hint.

Thirdly : There are those who believe that He who came to seek and to save that which is lost, will never abandon His great redemptive work, but that through all the ages, as long as even a solitary sheep is wandering in darkness and in peril, He will follow it, and endeavour to bring it back to the flock and to the fold. They recognise the invincible freedom of the human will, and therefore shrink from asserting that all men will ultimately be saved ; but they contend that the infinite love of God will never relinquish the effort to save men.

Fourthly : There are those who retain, at least in a modified form, the Calvinistic doctrine of irresistible grace, and who maintain that the revolt of all men against God's authority will be at last subdued, and that since it is God's will that all men should be saved, the salvation of all men is certain.

Fifthly : There are those who believe that while the vision of God, and participation in the life of God, are granted only to those who receive Christ in this world, the immortal condition of those who have rejected Christ will not be intolerable ; that their future life will be simply the extension and continuation of their present life ; that many who are described in the New Testament as "lost," will find that though they have missed the higher form of perfection which was possible to them, their destiny is, on the whole, a very tolerable one ; that their intellectual activity and moral integrity remain, and that their life will be varied and enriched with many forms of honourable work and with many innocent delights.

Sixthly : There are those who believe that the predictions contained in the New Testament of the fate of those who in this life have resisted the authority of Christ, and rejected His mercy, are plainly intended to foreclose all hope of their ultimate restoration to God. The Good Shepherd, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, will Himself say to them, "Depart from Me, ye cursed." They will suffer according to their deserts. Some will be beaten with "few stripes," some with "many." But, sooner or later, the suffering will exhaust their strength ; like chaff, they are to be burnt up in a fire that cannot be quenched ; they are to be punished with eternal destruction. Life—eternal life—is the gift of God to those that are in Christ.

Those who are overtaken by the wrath of God will literally perish under the revelation of the Divine hostility to their sin.

To discuss these various theories would be to travel beyond the design of this paper. Nearly every one of the six is held and preached by a considerable number of ministers, and I believe that nearly every one of the six has a considerable number of adherents among the members of our Churches. At the present moment I am inclined to believe that the current is running most strongly in favour of universal restoration. For, on the one hand, the Calvinistic theory of the absolute power of God over the human will still retains a considerable hold on the minds of the people; and, on the other hand, punishment is popularly regarded as a means of securing future holiness rather than as the just result of past sin.

But I can hardly believe that this is more than a temporary reaction against the traditional doctrine of eternal torment. If language has any meaning, the New Testament menaces the impenitent with an irrevocable doom. The pains which threaten them are the pains of the second death, not a salutary discipline which is certain to secure their return to God.

The uncertainty which exists on this awful subject must impair the moral force of the Gospel. The greatness of the perdition which threatens those who are still in revolt against Christ has always been a great argument for repentance, faith, and holy living. The condition of human nature is so desperate that we cannot afford to lose that great appeal to fear which was used by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself with such terrible force, and which in nearly all the great revivals of religious life, from the Apostles' time to our own, has produced a profound impression on the hearts of men. "He that believeth shall be saved," loses more than half its meaning, unless we are able to add, "He that believeth not shall be condemned." *

Gentlemen, I have spoken too long, and yet have been able to discuss only a few of the graver questions suggested by my subject, and those I have been able to discuss have been discussed very imperfectly. You, I trust, will say what I have left unsaid, and will correct my mistakes.

R. W. DALE.

* The discussion indicated that the subject on which the keenest interest existed both among ministers and delegates, was the question of the final destiny of the impenitent. A Worcestershire minister asked whether Scripture has anything to tell us concerning what happens to the impenitent beyond the Judgment. A South Staffordshire minister said that the Romish doctrine of Purgatory was a strong moral attraction to Rome. A Warwickshire minister thought that we should be satisfied with using the language of Scripture about the future of the lost. A South Staffordshire minister protested against this—which seemed an evasion of the difficulty. He called attention to the fact that our English version sometimes misleads unlearned readers by leading them to confound Hades with Hell.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

JAN. 7.—“*Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*”—Col. iii. 17.

CHRISTIAN doctrine and Christian practice go together. St. Paul has been reminding the Christians at Colosse that Christ is “the image of the invisible God ;” that “in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Christ is also “the first-born of the whole creation ;” He is the Lord of the whole universe ; as “all things were created by Him,” so they were created “for Him.” The false teachers who were trying to lead the Colossians astray from the simplicity of their faith in Christ, were talking to them about the worship of angels. In this “there was a show of humility, for there was a confession of weakness in this subservience to inferior mediatorial agencies. It was held feasible to grasp at the lower links of the chain which bound earth to heaven when heaven itself seemed far beyond the reach of man. The successive grades of intermediate beings were as successive steps, by which man might mount the ladder leading up to the throne of God. This carefully woven web of sophistry the Apostle tears to shreds. The doctrine of the false teachers was based on confident assumptions respecting angelic beings of whom they could know nothing. It was, moreover, a denial of Christ’s twofold personality and His mediatorial office. . . . He raises up man to God, for He brings down God to man. Thus the chain is reduced to a single link, this link being the Word made flesh. To substitute allegiance to any other spiritual mediator is to sever the connection of the limbs with the Head, which is the centre of life and the mainspring of all energy throughout the body. (Col. ii. 18, 19.)

“Hence follows the practical conclusion that whatever is done must be done ‘in the name of the Lord.’ Wives must submit to their husbands ‘in the Lord ;’ children must obey their parents ‘in the Lord ;’ servants must work for their masters as working ‘unto the Lord.’ This iteration ‘in the Lord,’ ‘unto the Lord,’ is not an irrelevant form of words ; but arises as an immediate inference from the main idea which underlies the doctrinal portion of the epistle.”†

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition ; these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble ; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

† Lightfoot on Colossians. Pp. 103, 104.

"Whatsoever we do," we are to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." We have given up our life—our whole life—to Him. We must not take it back, and use any of our time and strength in our own affairs. A bricklayer who is sent to repair a wall comes "in the name" of the builder who employs him, and ought to do the work as his employer wants it done. Lord Salisbury has gone to Constantinople in the name of the English people, and should propose nothing at the Conference except what he thinks would be for their highest good and honour. In the same way we are to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." We are His servants ; we have no right to live at all, except the right which we have received from Him. He has bought us ; we belong to Him. Self must be suppressed ; we must live to please and glorify Christ.

We are more than His servants. He is the Head of the body, and we are His members ; His name belongs to us. My hand does what I want to have done ; my feet carry me where I want to go ; my voice utters what I want to have spoken. They act for *me*. They have no separate and independent life. And we Christian people ought to try to become so perfectly one with Christ that we may come to do His will just as our own hands and feet and lips do our will. If we remembered that we have to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus," we should feel how necessary it is to enter into perfect union with Him.

The words may help us in many practical difficulties. When we are doubtful as to whether we should go to any particular place, we may ask whether we can be quite clear that Christ sends us there, so that we can go *in His name*. If Lord Salisbury went to Pekin instead of to Constantinople, he could not go in the name of England ; England does not want him to go to Pekin. When we are uncertain whether any particular thing ought to be done or left undone, we may ask whether we can be quite sure that we have Christ's authority for doing it, so that we can do it *in His name*. If Lord Salisbury were to consent to leave the Balkan provinces at the mercy of the Turk, he would be betraying his trust. He has to act in the name of England, and England wants to see those provinces safe from Turkish tyranny and wickedness in all time to come.

The words may help us in our prayers. Do we want anything in order that we may serve Christ ? Then we may ask for it with the same kind of confidence with which a workman asks for what he wants in order to serve his master. A carpenter at the bench does not want the wood and the tools and the nails and the screws and the glue for himself ; he wants them for his master. When we have given ourselves to Christ and are living for Him, the wisdom and the strength we need are necessary to us that we may do Christ's work, and there-

fore we may ask for them in Christ's name. About some things that we think we want for Christ's work, we may be mistaken, and then our prayers will not be answered; but this will not grieve us. God knows better than we can know what Christ wants to have done, and what Christ wants to have done by us. If, therefore, when we ask anything for Christ's sake and do not receive it, we know the reason.

JAN. 14.—“*Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people.*”—Luke ii. 10.

What a beautiful story it is—the story of the appearance of the angels to the shepherds as they watched their flocks by night! It never loses its charm. It is as fresh to us in our manhood as it was when we were children. It fills us whenever we read it with the old childish wonder and delight. Perhaps because of its perfect beauty it seems almost to belong to the region of poetry and the imagination, and yet while we are reading it, the marvellous night seems to return. We are with the shepherds and their sheep on the pastures which lie below the mountain village in which David was born a thousand years before. We hardly draw our breath because of the solemn stillness of the night. We feel the cold air on our faces. We see the dark purple sky above us unstained by a solitary cloud; the large stars have a soft liquid light unknown in these northern heavens; and the glory of the Lord shines round about us; we see the radiant form of the angel, and we hear his words, “Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy;” and then the heavens open, and a host of angels, rank above rank, in white raiment and with harps of gold, fill the night with splendour, and we hear the song, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men.”

“I bring you good tidings.” What the angel had to say, the shepherds could learn only by listening to him. This is the way in which the Gospel is to be learnt. It is of no use in the world trying to elaborate out of our own head the news which God has sent us. It comes to us from Heaven; we must be told it, or else we can know nothing about it.

It is very easy to slip out of the right attitude of mind in relation to the Gospel. It is easy, for instance, for a man to say—I have formed my own theory about God and about how He rules mankind, and how He saves us, and Christian theology does not correspond to my theory; I prefer the result of my own thoughts about these great matters to what I find in the New Testament. When a man takes that position he forgets the whole state of the case. The Gospel claims to be a message from God—not the discovery of human genius—not the result of human speculation. It professes to be “news,” and we can know nothing

about it as long as we shut ourselves up in our own thoughts. We must listen to learn.

The truth of the good tidings which the angel brought did not depend upon the way in which the shepherds received them. The shepherds might have cared nothing for the news. They might have sat and discussed it together all the night through, and have come to the conclusion that it was no concern of theirs—that they had their sheep to look after and their living to earn, and that poor men like themselves had nothing to do with the birth of a King. Even if they had disbelieved the news, their disbelief would not have made it less true.

It is just the same with the Gospel which is preached to ourselves. No one is asked to make the Gospel true by caring about it or by believing it. The Gospel is true, whether we care about it and whether we believe it or not.

It is the same with all news. When the terrible letters about the atrocities committed by the Turks began to appear in the *Daily News* last autumn, the Prime Minister treated them as containing nothing more than coffee-house gossip. His want of faith did not affect the truth of the letters. Though he did not believe in the horrible intelligence, villages were being burnt, men, women, and children were being murdered, and crimes too shameful to be described were being committed by the troops of an empire which owes its existence in Europe to the power of England. The correspondent of the *Daily News* did not say—Believe what I tell you, and it will become true; he told his story, and whether men believed it or not, its truth remained the same.

All this is plain enough; and yet when the good tidings about Christ and His salvation come to some men, they seem to think that the tidings are not true until they have first believed them. Of course, therefore, they cannot believe them. If news is neither true nor false until it is believed, to believe it is impossible. But it is true that God loves us—whether we believe it or not. It is true that Christ died for us—whether we believe it or not. It is true that He is our Prince to whom we owe obedience—whether we believe it or not. We are not asked to make these glorious facts true by believing them; we should thank God that they are true, and we should let the news fill our hearts with joy.

The joy of which the angel had come to bring tidings, was joy for "all the people"—the Jewish people: "to them was the first message of joy before the bursting in of the Gentiles—just as here the one angel gives the prefatory announcement, before the multitude of the heavenly host burst in with their 'peace on earth' and goodwill towards men" (Alford). And now, the Gospel is good tidings to all the world. There

is a sense in which the Gospel has to be preached to men one by one ; there is another sense in which it has to be preached to the race. The Gospel itself is a Gospel to the whole world ; one by one, men have to be asked to rejoice in it.

But someone will say, Surely the Gospel is only for those who are penitent, for those who believe, for those who are willing to break with sin, and to live for Christ.

No, the Gospel is for the impenitent as well as for the penitent. It is a terrible thing to have sinned against God. It is a worse thing not to have repented of sin. But the Gospel tells the impenitent that Christ is exalted "to give repentance and remission of sins." The Gospel is for those who have not yet believed as well as for those who believe. It tells them that Christ has come to seek and to save them. The Gospel is for those who are living in sin as well as for those who are trying to escape from sin. It tells them that Christ has died for them, and that through Him they may have strength to sin no more.

What the angel said to the shepherds was true for rich and poor, for bad and good, for children and for aged men. The Christ had come to rule over all the Jewish people. This was good news for the whole of the Jewish race. And the Gospel is good news for all mankind.

JAN. 21.—"*He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.*"—Luke i. 32.

These are also the words of an angel. They were spoken to Mary by the angel who came to tell her that she was to be the mother of our Lord.

The hope of the Jewish nation was to be at last fulfilled. The King they had so long waited for was now about to be born. He was to receive the throne of His father David. The Jews over whom He came to reign refused to submit to His authority ; but His crown was not to depend upon their loyalty to Him ; though the Jews rejected Him, He reigns at the right hand of God.

The kingship of Christ is a great part of the Gospel. When John the Baptist began to preach in the desert, he announced that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. When our Lord began to preach He, too, announced that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. When the disciples whom He sent out during His earthly ministry began to preach, they, in their turn, announced that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. The Christ was come, and would soon begin to reign.

But when Christ was about to ascend into heaven He did not tell the Apostles to go about the world announcing that the Kingdom was at hand ; He said, "All power [authority] is given unto Me in heaven

and on earth. Go, ye therefore,—go, because this authority is Mine,—and disciple all nations.” And when Peter was before the council he said, “Him hath God exalted to be Prince and Saviour.” This is the good news which we have to make known to all men—Christ, who died for the world, is now the King of all mankind. I do not complain if anyone says that the whole Gospel is contained in the words of St. Paul to the jailer, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” or in his great declaration in the Epistle to the Romans, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;” or in the words of St. John, “He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” And yet these words contain only a part of the Gospel. It is unsafe to forget the form in which the Gospel was preached by Christ Himself and by His Apostles.

The Gospel is not a new theory and explanation of the mysteries of the moral universe. It is not a new system of religious truth. It is not a promise; it is not a golden chain of promises. The Gospel is the announcement that Christ, on whom God laid the iniquities of us all, is the Prince whose laws we have to keep, and on whose power we have to rely for protection against all our enemies.

Let my readers imagine themselves the inhabitants of a town in Bulgaria which has been suffering for centuries from the oppression of the Turk. You have been impoverished by exorbitant taxes irregularly levied. The tribunals of justice are accessible to bribery. Your property is destroyed. Your lives and the lives of your children are in constant peril. What do you want?

Here is a gentleman who will explain it all. He will tell you the history of the Turkish conquests in Europe. He will tell you how it happened that you came under the power of the terrible race; he will explain all the diplomatic tangles in which your fortunes have been involved; he will show with great clearness that it was inevitable that you should have been subject to an intolerable tyranny till now, and that perhaps the jealousies of the great Powers will perpetuate your sufferings and your wrongs. This gentleman's philosophy and learning will give you little comfort. You want to know how you are to escape from your miseries, not how you came to suffer them.

Here is another gentleman who has an admirable scheme of his own for liberating you from the oppression of the Turk—a scheme drawn up with great skill, and providing ample securities for your freedom. You are to elect your own communal boards and the governors over the larger districts; you are also to elect the governors of each province; and there is to be a federal assembly to bind together the whole of the Slavonic provinces. The gentleman who expounds the scheme is very

eloquent, as well as very ingenious. But what is the good of his scheme? It is the man's own. It is a mere political paper. It can work no deliverance.

But let another man come to you, and say that the Conference of the great Powers at Constantinople has drawn up a scheme for the better government of the provinces,—a scheme larger, bolder, and more generous than your most daring hopes; that they have appointed a representative of their own, who is to work through a native administration; that the military forces of Russia and England will sustain him. The whole case is changed. And this is but a faint parallel to the emancipation which Christ has accomplished for our race.

He has come to reign. At His coming he offers forgiveness for all past offences, and He declares that He has power to liberate all that submit to His throne from the evil passions and evil habits from which they have struggled in vain to liberate themselves.

Of course the Bulgarians might refuse to accept the representative of the Conference. They might be too proud to receive their freedom at the hands of foreign Powers. They might prefer to fight for their own deliverance. They might insist on having a king of their own election, and they might resist the authority of the prince selected by the Great Powers. Village after village might revolt. But the resistance would be ineffectual. They would have no choice but to submit, or to suffer the certain punishment of rebellion.

We, too, may refuse to acknowledge the authority of Christ; but whether He shall reign or not does not depend upon us. Our duty is to do homage to the Prince that God has appointed, and to obey His laws. If we revolt, we bring upon ourselves "eternal destruction."

JAN. 28.—"*We have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*"—Heb. iv. 15.

The Lord Jesus Christ was tempted to sin—really tempted.

He had been fasting forty days and forty nights in the wilderness, and was faint and exhausted from want of food. The evil spirit tried to take advantage of the physical weakness of our Lord to induce Him to sin: "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread:" Thou hast the power to work a miracle if Thou art really God's Son; now is the time to use it. But the miraculous power of Christ was not intended to relieve Him from the common sufferings of human nature. He worked a miracle on more than one occasion to give bread to others; but He would have misused His power had He worked a miracle to provide bread for Himself; and when this temptation came to Him, He resisted it in the strength of His perfect faith in

the Father : " Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The strength of His faith laid Him open to another assault. Satan tried to lead Him on from faith to presumption. " The devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple and saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down : for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee : and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone." To venture into unnecessary danger relying on God's promise that He will defend from all harm those that trust in Him, is no uncommon sin among people who are under strong religious excitement. But we have no right to expect God to keep His promises unless we are keeping His precepts. When God puts our faith in Himself to the test by placing us in danger, we may rely on His protection ; but for us to put His fidelity to the test by running risks which there is no need for us to incur, is a very different matter. Christ met the temptation by replying, " Thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God."

There was still another chance of leading our Lord into sin, and Satan determined to try it. Our Lord had come to claim the submission of all men to His authority. " The kingdoms of the world and the glory of them " were to be His. His heart was set upon establishing the reign of God over all mankind. This was " the joy that was set before Him," for which He was ready to " endure the cross, despising the shame." Satan offers Him the immediate accomplishment of all His desires and hopes, on one condition : if the Lord Jesus Christ will " fall down and worship " Satan himself, Satan will surrender the whole world to Christ's authority. Christ is ready to suffer in order to save the world from the devil ; but not even to save the world from the devil is Christ willing to sin. This temptation, too, in other forms, comes to man still. To secure the triumph of a great cause we are tempted to do bad things. The devil tries to induce us to serve him, in order that we may get the will of God done.

The first temptation was addressed to our Lord's physical weakness ; the second to the very strength of His personal faith in the Father ; the third to His zeal for the triumph of the Kingdom of Heaven.

He who was tempted Himself can sympathise with us when we are tempted, and in the time of our weakness and peril it strengthens our faith in Him to remember that there was a time when He too was weak, and when He was exposed to the malice and subtlety of the devil. He can " be touched with the feeling of our *infirmities*." But we are very apt to call things by their wrong names. A man who has a bad temper sometimes speaks of his temper as though it were an " *infirmity*." It is

the "infirmity" of other men that occasionally they drink more than is good for them. It is the "infirmity" of other men that they love their money too well, and that they are mean and close-fisted. The writers of the New Testament would not have called these moral imperfections "infirmities," but *sins*. We do ourselves harm if we call them by the softer name. Christ has no sympathy, no fellow-feeling, with these things. It is with our weakness which makes us accessible to temptation that He sympathises—not with our wickedness which is the result of yielding to temptation.



NEW YEARS' READINGS.

"EVERY man," says dear old Charles Lamb, in his essay on New Year's Eve, "hath two birthdays—two days, at least, in every year, which set him upon revolving the lapse of time, as it affects his mortal duration. The one is that which in an especial manner he termeth *his*. In the gradual desuetude of old observances this custom of solemnising our proper birthday hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understand anything in it beyond cake and orange. But the birth of a new year is of an interest too wide to be pretermitted by king or cobbler. No one ever regarded the first of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam."

Few of Lamb's essays—the famous Essays of Elia—are more characteristic or more charming than this on New Year's Eve. As we take down the volume to make a single extract, the old fascination exerts itself: we are away with Lamb in his chambers in the Temple, or his desk at the India House, or his cottage at Edmonton. Coleridge, Wordsworth, Dyer, Talfourd, loom dimly through the dusky twilight; we see the tall folios which Elia loved to hold, "whole armfuls," in his embraces; we hear the faint stammer of his voice, and listen to the wise and kindly humour of his talk. There is no author who possesses in such perfection as Charles Lamb this faculty of impressing himself upon his works, and of making readers feel as if they had known him in person, and had held familiar converse with him. This New Year's Essay brings him vividly to mind. It is full of his peculiar humour: grave, serious, solemn even; gentle in its kindness; sweet and musical as a poem; touched here and there with playfulness; introspective, as Lamb always was, very personal to himself, yet so general in its self-revelation that all of us may find in it something applicable to our own state and feeling. As we read page after page, the intended

solitary extract becomes all too poor ; it is fitting that a New Year's Reading should give us more than a single taste of dear old Elia, for while speaking for himself, he speaks also for all of us. Take, for example, his reflections on the New Year's chimes :—

"Of all sound of all bells—(bells, the music highest bordering upon Heaven)—most solemn and touching is the peal that rings out the old year. I never hear it without a gathering up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused over the past twelvemonth ; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected in that regretted time. I begin to know its worth, as when a person dies. It takes a personal colour ; nor was it a poetic flight in a contemporary when he exclaimed—

'I saw the skirts of the departing year.'

It is no more than what in sober sadness every one of us seems to be conscious of in that awful leave-taking. I am sure I felt it, and all felt it with me last night ; though some of my companions affected rather to manifest an exhilaration at the birth of the coming year than any very tender regrets for the decease of its predecessor. And I am none of those who 'welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.' I am naturally, beforehand, shy of novelties ; new books, new faces, new years, from some mental twist which makes it difficult in me to face the prospective. I have almost ceased to hope, and am sanguine only in the prospect of other, former years."

Submissive to this bent of his mind—which of us has not sometimes felt it?—he goes back to his childhood. Here, he exclaims, is "the man Elia," this "stupid changeling] of five and forty," whom, he protests, he knows too well to have any respect for him ; "a stammering buffoon ; what you will ; lay it on and spare not ; I subscribe to it all, and much more than thou canst be willing to lay at his door." And yonder is the figure to which he fondly turns—"the child Elia, that 'other me'—there in the background !" While the chimes ring out their melody—solemn, but glad ; joyous, yet with a touch of melancholy—the vision of the child fills up the space of vision.

"I can cry," he writes, "over its patient small-pox at five, and rougher medicaments. I can lay its poor fevered head upon the sick pillow at Christ's, and wake with it in surprise at the gentle posture of maternal tenderness hanging over it, that, unknown, had watched its sleep. I know how it shrank from any, the least colour of falsehood. God help thee, Elia, how art thou changed ! Thou art sophisticated. I know how honest, how courageous (for a weakling) it was—how religious, how hopeful !"

What reader is there who cannot go back to his own "other me"—the shade and shape of the life that once was, the dream of the life that was to be ? Elia sets us musing. Old times crowd upon the memory ; forgotten scenes grow bright again ; hopes long since abandoned revive in full strength and vigour ; promises unfulfilled come

back to mind, as regrets that are vain in their hopelessness. Twenty years ago, when manhood stamped its seal upon us ; thirty years ago, when boyhood was bright and sunny ; forty years ago, when childhood bloomed like a newly-opening rose ;—how strange it all seems to look back upon, as, in the winter night, as the year is slowly dying, we

“ Heap the fire—shut out the biting air,
And from its station wheel the easy-chair
Thus fenced and warm, in silent fit,”

and we go back with Elia, in sad sweet memory, and recall the past new years, their hopes and fears ; the bright fresh promise of one, the gloom and pain of another ; the golden years that brought us ease from sickness, or the love of dear ones, or the precious gift of enlarged and purified spiritual or intellectual life ; the sorrow-laden, leaden years that found us depressed and burdened, drawn downwards to the earth in mind and heart, bereft of some who were dearer to us than life itself. Retrospective and introspective—looking back upon our path, and looking into our hearts : that is the double task to which the new year sets us all ; but few of us have the wit to tell the story as Charles Lamb told it. But we must not reprint the essay. Here we part company with the kindly humorist, though it is hard to break off from Elia when we have once begun with him. Like Coleridge, in that famous fit of abstraction, we could take him by the button, and hold converse with him all the day.

The Poets, too, have something to say to us of the New Year. Not so much, however, as might perhaps be thought. Spring is the true song-time of the poets. Sometimes they paint for us the “Summer’s Golden Prime,” or bind up wild-flowers in their autumn sheaves ; but winter chills them, and the New Year, with its cold and gloom, charms them not. They listen to the bells, as William Morris sings—

“ Up in the spire
The watcher set high o’er the half-hid town,
Hearkens the sound of chiming bells fall down
Below him ; and so dull and dead they seem
That he might well-nigh be amidst a dream,
Wherein folk hear and hear not.”

The departure of the old year, and the coming of the new, suggest to them chiefly images of pain, sorrow, desolation, and death. Thus Longfellow, in his “Midnight Mass for the Dying Year” :—

“ Yes, the Year is growing old
And his eye is pale and bleared !
Death, with frosty hand and cold
Plucks the old man by the beard,
Sorely, sorely ! ”

The poem is so well known that it is unnecessary to quote the rest.

Equally solemn is the song of another American poet—English as well as American—James Russell Lowell, in his poem on “New Year’s Eve, 1850”:

“ ’Tis the midnight of the century—hark !
Through aisle and arch of Godminster have gone
Twelve throbs that tolled the zenith of the dark,
And onward now the starry hands move on !
‘ Mornward,’ the angelic watchers say,
Passed is the sorest trial ;
No plot of man can stay
The hand upon the dial ;
Night is the dark stem of the lily Day ! ”

These sing of Night. Take, by contrast, a daylight study from a Scotch poet, exquisite in his beauty, but now too little read, at least on our side of the Tweed. It is Grahame’s picture of “a Winter Sabbath Day,” fitting, in its calm purity, to be a New Year’s Sabbath :—

“ How dazzling white the snowy scene ! deep, deep,
The stillness of the winter Sabbath-day—
Not even a footfall heard. Smooth are the fields,
Each hollow pathway level with the plain :
Hid are the bushes, save that, here and there,
Are seen the topmost shoots of brier or broom.
High-ridged the whirled drift has almost reach’d
The powdered key-stone of the churchyard porch.
Mute hangs the hooded bell ; the tombs lie buried ;
No step approaches to the house of prayer. ”

Since we are among the Scotchmen—New Year’s Day is their great day of festivity, as Christmas is ours in England—let us recall Robert Burns’s New Year’s letter to Mrs. Dunlop. It is a short and pithy sermon in verse :—

“ What did yesternight deliver ?
‘ Another year is gone for ever.’
And what is this day’s strong suggestion ?
‘ The passing moment’s all we rest on.’
Rest on—for what ? What do we hear ?
Or why regard the passing year ?
Will time, amus’d with proverb’d lore,
Add to our date one minute more ?
A few days may—a few days must :—
Repose us in the silent dust.
Then is it wise to damp our bliss ?
Yes, all such reasonings are amiss !
The voice of nature loudly cries,
And many a message from the skies,
That something in us never dies :
That on this frail, uncertain state
Hang matters of eternal weight ;

That future life in worlds unknown
Must take its hue from this alone :
Whether as heavenly glory bright
Or dark as misery's woeful night."

Very few English poets mention the New Year. In Shakespeare, neither in his plays nor poems, is there one reference to it. Milton has nothing ; Herbert nothing ; Dryden nothing ; Pope nothing. Spenser figures the season only once, in the personification of January :—

" Came old January, wrapped well
In many weeds to keep the cold away ;
Yet did he quake and quiver like to quell
And blowe his nayles to warm them if he may ;
For they were numbed with holding all the day
An hatchet keene, with which he felled wood,
And from the trees did lop the needlesse spray."

One might have expected Cowper to make much of the New Year, but it seems not to have struck his fancy. In the longer poems, whether descriptive or didactic, there is no reference to it. One short poem alone, his graceful New Year's gift to Mrs. Throckmorton, is the only reference to the day. This, one of his least-remembered pieces, is worth quoting for the sake of the delicate flattery under which poetical friendship contrived to display itself :—

" Maria ! I have every good
For thee wished many a time,
Both sad and in a cheerful mood,
But never yet in rhyme.
To wish thee fairer is no need,
More prudent, or more sprightly,
Or more ingenious, or more freed
From temper-flaws unsightly.
What favour then not yet possessed,
Can I for thee require,
In wedded love already blessed
To thy whole heart's desire ?
None here is happy but in part ;
Full bliss is bliss divine :
There dwells some wish in every heart,
And doubtless one in thine.
That wish, on some fair future day
Which Fate shall brightly gild,
('Tis blameless, be it what it may),
I wish it all fulfilled."

Crabbe, again, a true poet of times and seasons, leaves the New Year out of count altogether ; and so does Goldsmith. Shenstone, also, has no commemorative stanzas, nor has Akenside, nor Kirke White ; nor, stranger than all, has Thomson. To Wordsworth the New Year

might well have been attractive, but he takes no note of it. Keats is silent; so is Byron. Coleridge makes one brief but noble reference, in his "Ode to the Departing Year":—

"Now I recentre my immortal mind,
In the deep Sabbath of meek self content;
Cleansed from the vaporous passions that bedim
God's image, sister of the Seraphim."

From Shelley, we take a rare jewel of melodious beauty, a couple of stanzas from his "Dirge for the Year":—

"As the wild air stirs and sways
The tree-swung cradle of a child,
So the breath of these rude days,
Rocks the year—be calm and mild:
Trembling hours; she will arise
With new love within her eyes.
January grey is here,
Like a sexton by her grave;
February bears the bier,
March with grief doth howl and rave,
And April weeps; but O ye hours!
Follow with May's brightest flowers."

Campbell devotes one poem, and but one, to the day—a "Thought suggested by the New Year":—

"The more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages:
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.
The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals, lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.
But as the care-worn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye stars, that measure life to man,
Why seem your courses quicker?
When joys have lost their bloom and breath,
And life itself is vapid:
Why, as we reach the Fall of Death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?
It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding;
When one by one our friends have gone,
And left our bosoms bleeding."

Last, we come to Tennyson, whose poems on the New Year are fresh in every mind. One stanza may be quoted from his "Death of the Old Year":—

“ Alack ! our friend is gone !
 Close up his eyes, tie up his chin :
 Step from the corpse, and let him in
 That standeth there alone,
 And waiteth at the door.
 There’s a new foot on the floor, my friend,
 And a new face at the door, my friend,
 A new face at the door.”

The verses in his “ In Memoriam are too well-known to need full repetition :—

“ Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow :
 The year is going, let him go ;
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.”

New Year’s customs, though marked by local diversities, are in substance much the same everywhere. A cynic might not unjustly describe them as a combination of boisterous begging and roystering drinking, poetically rendered, so far as they can be made poetical, by Herrick’s

“ Jolly
 Verse, crowned with ivy and with holly,
 That tells of winter’s tale and mirth.”

In Worcestershire and some parts of Herefordshire, boys and girls go round to the farm-houses on New Year’s morning, and sing, or rather say, all in a breath, the following doggerel lines :—

“ Bud well, bear well,
 God send you fare well,
 Every sprig and every spray
 A bushel of apples next New Year’s Day.
 Morning, master and mistress,
 A Happy New Year,
 A pocketful of money,
 A cellarful of beer.
 Please to give me a New Year’s gift.”

The closing lines, and certainly the final demand, are familiar enough everywhere, for bands of clamorous and persevering urchins make New Year’s morning hideous with them. Similar inquiries, full of rude blessings, and ruder beggings, are to be met with in many parts of England, especially in the northern counties ; and in Scotland, where friendly visits and good wishes on New Year’s morning are made the pretext of far too much heavy drinking. Of late years, however, this has been much moderated, and perhaps, in course of time, it may altogether die out.

New Year’s gifts, now practically disused in England, though the new custom of sending New Year’s cards may possibly revive them, were once not only common, but almost compulsory. The practice may

have lingered as a Roman tradition, for the Romans gave such gifts. The Saxons kept up the custom, it was preserved in mediæval days, and there are abundant traces of it as far down as the reign of Charles the First. Kings did not disdain to extort such donations even when they were not offered. Henry the Third, according to Matthew Paris, distinguished himself in this way. In the accounts of Henry the Sixth there is a list of presents made to that monarch between Christmas Day and February 4th, 1428, consisting of various sums of money, from 40s. down to 3s. 4d. Edward the Sixth took such presents. Philip and Mary received plate: Cardinal Pole gave them a salt-cellar, enamelled, and a pair of silver pots, weighing 143 ounces; of clothes, the Princess Elizabeth giving her sister a kirtle, embroidered with silver; of fruit, sugar, gloves, Turkey hens, fat geese, oxen, sweet meats, rose water, and other miscellaneous articles. Elizabeth, when her turn came, kept up the custom with remarkable vigour. Every year she took presents from her great officers of state, prelates, peers, knights, physicians, and all officers of the household, even down to the dustman! The presents consisted of all imaginable things—money, ornaments, caskets studded with precious stones, jewels, gowns, petticoats, fans, and gloves. In 1561, her silk-woman, Mrs. Montague, gave her a pair of silk stockings, and “henceforth,” says Howell in his “History of the World,” “she never wore cloth-hose any more.” In this particular year the Queen got in her New Year’s gifts nearly £1,300, in money; the Archbishop of Canterbury giving £40, the Archbishop of York £30, other prelates £20 or £10, and temporal peers from £20 downwards. When money was given it was customary for the Sovereign to return to the donors articles of plate, corresponding in some degree to the value of the gift. Thus, in 1577-78, Elizabeth gave away 5,889 ounces of silver plate. One roll of gifts for a single year of James the First shows money given to the King amounting to £1,293, in return for which the donors received plate—fifty ounces for £40, thirty ounces for £20, and so on in proportion. Two stories of New Year’s gifts may enliven this antiquarian detail. One is of Sir Thomas More. As Chancellor he had decided a case in favour of a lady, who rewarded him with a pair of gloves on New Year’s Day, the gloves containing forty gold coins, of the kind then called angels. Sir Thomas sent back this gold, with a letter: “Mistress, since it were against good manners to refuse your New Year’s gift, I am content to take your gloves; but as for the lining, I utterly refuse it.” The other story, from “The Banquet of Rare Jests,” is of Archie Armstrong, Court Jester to Charles the First. A nobleman gave him a New Year’s present of some gold pieces, less in amount than Archie thought he should have had. He shook his head, and said they were too light. “Prithee, then, Archie,” the donor said to

him, "let me see them again, there is one I would be loth to part with." The jester, expecting an amended gift, returned the gold. The nobleman put it back into his pocket, saying, "I once gave my money into the hands of a fool, who had not the wit to keep it." The story has a moral: many fools get wealth, and let it slip through their fingers in vain endeavours to make more of it. If this lesson could be impressed upon the mind of every reader, it would be a New Year's gift worth having.

There is one thing the New Year brings to most of us—the keeping of a new diary. This is an amusing solemnity in which people indulge with a degree of gravity not a little surprising, considering how soon the effort is abandoned. For a few weeks, perhaps, the entries of notes and engagements are kept up; we even look forward to the unfilled pages with a shade of melancholy at being unable to find entries for them so long beforehand, and we fancy that at the year's close the diary will form a record of our occupations, labours, amusements, and fancies, for the whole twelvemonth. Alas, for the vanity of human desires, the feebleness of human resolutions! The entries soon grow fewer, the pages become blanker and blanker, till, long before Midsummer, we put the diary into a drawer, and think no more of it. Such a memorial of unfulfilled intentions lies before the writer as he pens these lines. It is a handsome diary, bound in red morocco, its pages neatly ruled, its printed portion full of that diversified kind of matter which seems so comfortably useful at the beginning of the year, and is so little thought of or cared for during its progress. Then the entries! It is sad to look at the pages which ought to have made a complete record of occupation. January is full—even trivial engagements are noted, to make a show. February is fairly noted up. March begins to show a falling off—thenceforward there is nothing. It is a picture of man's life in little. We begin with good resolutions. January the First is the great day for this kind of work. Everybody intends to do well for the coming year. We look back upon the past year with regret, mostly; often with shame; sometimes with dread: it has been so unprofitable, so deeply marked by opportunities neglected, intentions unfulfilled, good designs formed and put aside, brilliant hopes that have faded into ashy grey. So we shut the record, and fasten down the page: it is done with, and may be forgotten. We will do better now: the good work of the New Year shall efface the memory of past failure. Our life shall be higher, purer, nobler; we will strive to serve God and benefit man, to conquer ourselves, and live in good-will with our fellows. We feel—even the best and most generous of us—that Wordsworth is right—

"The world is too much with us: late and soon
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers."

It shall be so no longer. The "narrowing lust of gold," the sin and the curse of our age—shall cease to exert its baneful influence. Love of ease, the desire of personal advancement, or distinction, carelessness of the feelings or interests of others,—we will have none of these. Whoever else fails, we will do our duty. Public work and private obligations, each shall have their fair share of time and thought. Self-sacrifice shall be our rule; self-discipline our daily business. If we encounter disappointment, we will strive the harder; if losses befall us, we will bear them with patience; if material good comes to us, we will be humbly thankful, and will use it as not abusing it. In our own souls there shall be a loftier tone; our tempers shall be sweet, our forbearance great, our patience enduring, our industry unceasing. These are the resolutions of the New Year; these, and a thousand more, which each man knows for himself, in their full measure of intention, and which each knows best in their measure of abandonment and failure. It is a day of humiliation as well as of hope, this first day of the New Year. Let us look for strength beyond ourselves, to realise the one, and to bear the other. As the solemn strokes declare the ending of the Old Year, let our hearts be filled with thankfulness for mercy in the time gone by. As the happy bells peal out the music of the New Year, let our souls go with them, upwards and heavenwards, in prayer for blessing and for guidance in the time to come.

NOTES ON RURAL NONCONFORMITY.*

BY A VILLAGE PASTOR.

THE village in which I live and work is in a line of villages stretching along one of the prettiest valleys in the country. The population is, with the exception of a few village shop-keepers, purely agricultural. There is not a mill or a mine in the district. The old chapel which I found in the place was a sort of booth, made of wood and slate and plaster; it was erected about the year 1802. So leaky was it at that time that my hoary locks have been more than once wet with the rain as I stood or sat in the pulpit, and when rain descended copiously and

* At one of the meetings of the Congregational Union last May, Dr. Parker suggested that it might not be a bad thing to have a session of the Union at which no minister having a salary of more than £100 a-year should be permitted to speak. We have received from a Village Pastor a few notes on Rural Nonconformity, which might perhaps have formed the substance of a speech at such a session. It strikes us as fairly illustrating the experience of many Nonconformist ministers in rural districts, and as showing the kind of stuff of which they are made.—EDITOR.

for a day or two, I have seen the water streaming down the inside of the walls into the pews, rendering it impossible to occupy them with comfort. One of the best supporters of the place affirmed, after one of these duckings, that he would give a handsome donation towards the repair of the chapel, or the erection of a new one; but that he would give no more money to anything till his pew was made "water-tight." This was felt to be a reasonable condition. Something was immediately done to the roof in the way of further "patching and mending." The building, however, had become so frail, that nothing could be effectually done. You might as well try to put a new constitution into an old man, or to renovate the Turkish Empire, or to retrieve Egyptian finance.

Better Finance Wanted.—What was to be done? Why not build a new chapel, especially as a considerable sum of money had been collected for that purpose and was reposing profitably in the bank? Hereby hangs a tale. Some few years previously a sad quarrel sprang up among the people; so fiercely and widely did it burn, that confidence was seriously impaired. "Confidence," as Lord Chatham said, "is a plant of slow growth." After this shock its growth in this village was very slow. And what was this quarrel about? It was about the management of chapel finance. The managers of finance in connection with some country chapels and Churches are too apt to forget that the principles and habits which regulate finance in secular life are of universal application, and cannot be violated in the chapel with impunity. The healing influence of a few years brought back public confidence. A neat and commodious chapel was built, and fairly filled. New life was imparted to the minister and people; but our troubles were not yet over. There was a delay of many months before we came to our financial settlement; but when it came it was perfectly satisfactory. Dilatory, slovenly finance is the occasion of much evil in country Churches; it is not too much to affirm that under proper management these Churches would yield one-third more than they now do.

It is all very well to question ministers of dependent country Churches about sermons, meetings, classes, conversions, and other things of this kind, and I for one, as the minister of a dependent country Church, or "agent" as I am sometimes irreverently called, must bear witness to the fact that the secretaries that I have had to do with have borne their "faculties meekly;" but would it not also be well to question deacons as to the management of Church and chapel finance? Are the entries of cash duly made? Is the minister's stipend paid with a fair degree of promptness and civility? Is there a disposition periodically to render up an account of cash to the Church, to strike and exhibit the balance-

sheet? Bad finance is at the root of many of the evils which afflict country Churches.

Small Pastorates.—Some of the advantages of a Sustentation Fund, with a central financial authority, might be pointed out. It would relieve the mind of the country pastor of anxious care about "food to eat and raiment to put on" for himself and family, and show him how by promptness of payment in a country village, where everything is known, and, indeed, more than everything, to "cut off occasion from them that seek occasion." It would discourage, and in the long run effectually prevent, the pernicious practice, too common among us, of setting up pastors in country districts of limited population, when there is not work enough, nor pay enough, for them. Country people will travel good distances on a Sunday morning to the central chapel to hear the pastor, to give him a shake of the hand, to know when he is coming to see them; they will exchange cordialities among themselves, with commendations or otherwise on the sermon, and the general state of affairs; they will exchange the books of the chapel library, the periodicals of the Chapel Reading Society; they will gladly accept the services of a lay brother for the pulpit in their hamlet chapel for the after parts of the day, and he good man, "nothing loth," will gladly go and favour them with his own sermon, or the sermon of someone else. It is quite necessary, however, that the pastor himself should occupy the hamlet pulpit as often as possible, and that the best lay preachers should frequently occupy the central pulpit in the after parts of the day. I am almost always in my pulpit on Sunday mornings, when the people come in from all round; and when I cannot get into it myself, I get somebody better than myself—not always an easy matter—according to Dr. Doddridge's advice. There is really no reason to set up numerous pastorates in country districts, but it is necessary to develop lay preaching and to give free scope for the exercise of it.

Numerous services on the Lord's-day, even in the central chapel, are not an unmixed good: one congregation often robs another; the three services taken together impose a heavy tax on the preaching power of the place, and leave little time for reading, meditation, and prayer. A pious Churchman remarked the other day that three full services in the parish church on Sunday were equivalent to three distinct churches in the parish, while they seriously augmented the power of the clergyman. This may do very well for the Episcopal Church, where cash and clergymen abound,—clergymen for whom prayers and sermons are ready-made; but the case is different with us. Long prayers, and also long sermons, are an abomination in the sight of God and man in rural chapels.

Small Chapels.—Among the hindrances to Evangelical religion, the

multiplication of small chapels amid scant and scattered populations, representing the sections and sub-sections of the Nonconformist community, must be mentioned, deplored, not to say denounced. It is a growing evil, and it is an evil which the institution of the Sustentation Fund will do much to check. The population of our villages does not increase; it is not destined to increase, because young people, better instructed than they were, leave for large towns or the Colonies; but the multiplication of small chapels does increase. I know a rural district in an adjoining county, in which there are seven small chapels, representing as many shades of Nonconformist belief, or as a Churchman sarcastically observed, constituting the seven lamps of the Nonconformist temple. Lamps enough there are in all conscience, but not a corresponding degree of light: just light enough to light loose and vagrant souls from one little chapel to another; loose and vagrant souls, which after many changes and much spiritual decline, commonly anchor amid the ever-varying robes and ritualisms of the parish church.

The late Lord Mayor of London appears to have employed himself in making the tour of the City Churches, a sort of civic archbishop, differently, yet splendidly attired. Whether this visitation was performed for his lordship's own benefit, or the benefit of the clergy, does not clearly appear. His report of sermons and services, however, was not agreeable to Episcopal ears. At a recent feast of the bishops, one of them slyly suggested that his piety had not been improved by his Sunday peregrinations. Very likely; Sunday vagrants rarely do improve, they are "no man's care, no man's credit." The Church and the world require combination, not diffusion; stragglers are constantly arriving from Babel, making "confusion worse confounded." The mountain of the house of the Lord will one day be established on the top of the mountain, and will be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. Some years ago an eminent critic, or commentator, whose name I do not recollect, observed that when Shakespeare arose he found a vast number of poetic fires blazing or flickering around him; that he combined those lights, and, by his matchless power and skill, concentrated them into a mighty flame, illuminating lands and souls, near and remote, with a splendour unrivalled in the history of the human imagination. Some such power is needed to combine the lights of the Nonconformist community in rural districts.

It is too much the habit in some circles to depreciate the importance of rural Nonconformity, to say that small Congregational Churches are more plague than profit, "interests" without capital, "causes" without effects. Be it so; and yet something might be said on the other side, if we could only bring a skilful advocate of fertile brain and freedom of

utterance into court. Let us see what can be done without these advantages. Strike, but hear, and hear before you strike. What the nursery is to the garden and the orchard, country Churches are to Churches in towns and to missionary enterprise. The best young men and women every year leave rural districts and Churches for large towns, and especially for London; some of the most successful metropolitan ministers have confessed that in the Sunday-school, in senior classes, in the ragged-school, in city mission work, the country recruit generally turns out well. Like the army recruit, he is rather awkward, not to say stupid, at first; but the raw material of a good working Christian is found in him, and the clever Londoner soon licks him into shape and agility. The raw material of all public service and enterprise is chiefly drawn from rural life. The touching narratives of Holy Writ, the history of Christianity, especially during its seasons of vigorous health, particularly since the Reformation; the history of the Holy Roman Empire, whose power was felt and is felt in all parts of the world, and will be felt long after the arch of Titus has mingled with the dust out of which it sprang; a thousand pregnant facts rebuke the contempt of rural life. Cromwell's Ironsides, who impressed themselves rather vigorously and abidingly on the breasts of mankind, and, when they died, "Left their lofty name, a light, a landmark on the cliffs of fame," were not drawn from the narrow lanes of London and Bristol, but from the broad lands and brown hills of the Eastern and Midland counties.

During the last decade many domestic servants, once in our British and Sunday-schools, have left us for London and foreign lands; the majority of them succeed, not a few rise into superior positions. These young people almost always remember "the rock whence they were hewn, the hole of the pit whence they digged, Abraham their father, and Sarah that bare them." Frequent letters reach their parents, occasionally letters reach their minister, most of them showing the growth of intelligence and piety; so that I, living in the midst of the simplicities of rural life and occupation, "far from the madding crowd," the most obscure Congregational minister in the body, or out of the body, less than the least of all saints, not worthy to be called a saint, have important letters from many cities and foreign lands, from emigrants and others, written in hard toil and rough homes, in sorrow and in joy, written also in sweet remembrance of the village homestead, the village chapel, the village pastor, and the God of our salvation. This enlargement of the narrow sphere of the village pastor yields him considerable encouragement, when "scorned by the proud and buffeted by the strong."

“ Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys and destiny obscure ;
 Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
 The short and simple annals of the poor.
 The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
 And all that beauty, all that wealth ere gave,
 Await alike the inevitable hour:
 The paths of glory lead—but to the grave.”

Schools.—Rural education is largely in the hands of the clergy, and those who are ruled by the clergy, notably the Ritualistic clergy, who are found everywhere. It must be admitted that they devote much time to the schools, and exercise much care and labour in drilling the fry of the villages in the traditions of the Church ; but it does not follow that all those who are thus drilled follow the traditions of the Church when they leave home. Not a few of them forsake the house of bondage, and find their way to some Free Church, where they learn and unlearn many things. In these Church schools, to which the inhabitants are compelled to send their children, the far-famed Conscience Clause is little or no protection to the poor Nonconformist. His landlord, his employer, the rulers of the parish charities, the committee of the parish club, are all in league with the rector or vicar, and they resent any attempt to interfere with the internal regulations of the school. Why are there so few complaints against the Conscience Clause ? Because the poor dare not complain.



UNIVERSITY LOCAL EXAMINATIONS.

I.

SCATTERED here and there throughout the country, often at some distance from busy centres of material and intellectual activity, in solitary farm-houses and in small country towns, there are many homes where study of some kind or another is the recreation of young and old, and taste for literature, or science, or art almost a family tradition. But the studies are desultory, and the tastes irregularly developed. The former need direction, the latter cultivation. What can supply these ? We would invite the attention of the occupants of such homes to the University Local Examinations, feeling sure that here they will find just that kind of aid which is so essential in their case. And in order to assure them of this fact, we purpose, after giving an account of the origin of these examinations, and their success up to this point, to show what the University requirements are ; what subjects should be chosen, and on what grounds ; what books may be recommended for study in the several subjects ; also what steps must be taken to arrange for a *local*

centre within easy reach, with such information as to fees, local expenses, and other minor details, as will place all necessary information clearly before those who are furthest removed from the main current of the movement, and have at the present moment the haziest notions of the way in which it may be utilised for their own benefit.

Local examinations or, more strictly speaking, "Examinations of students who are not members of the University," were first instituted by statute of the University of Oxford in the year 1857. One prominent feature of these examinations is that they do not require the student to go up to the University to be examined, but to some town or convenient place in his or her immediate locality, which is fixed upon as one of a number of *local centres*, at all of which they are arranged to take place simultaneously. This accounts for the term "local" in connection with these examinations.

As, however, the movement in favour of these examinations sprang from a desire to improve the educational condition of what are sometimes called the "middle classes," the term "Middle Class" has frequently been used in connection with them. But this latter title is objectionable on general grounds. Class distinctions are always to be avoided, and most of all in education. Society in this country has never, we are thankful to say, been separated by strongly-defined lines of demarcation into lower, middle, or upper classes. For want of better terms equally concise, these terms are, no doubt, convenient, and this must always be the apology for their use; but their use, as defining a particular kind of education, or of examination, is much to be deprecated.

It will be well, then, to state, once for all, that, in what follows, the term "middle class school," or, for preference, "middle school," denotes a school where the education given occupies, as regards extent and fulness, a *middle* position between that given in the public elementary schools on the one hand, and in the large public and grammar schools that prepare scholars mainly for the Universities on the other. Middle schools, in fact, are such as adapt their curriculum to the educational needs of those who will complete their education at ages varying from fifteen to eighteen years. The "middle classes," then, will be those who seek an education of this character for their children. In settlement of the question of title, it is sufficient to state that the term "middle class" has been repudiated by the Universities themselves, while that of "local" has been accepted by them and by the world at large as a very convenient designation for the examinations whose full and complete title is that given above.

The Local Examination movement having been inaugurated by Oxford in 1857, that University held its first examination in June, 1858,

followed closely by Cambridge, which held its first examination in December of the same year. The example thus set by the two older Universities has since been followed by the Universities of Durham, Edinburgh, St. Andrews, and the Queen's University in Ireland, so that at the present moment, in different parts of London and its suburbs, in all the principal centres of population, in country towns, and even at particular schools, examinations are annually conducted by the Universities of England, Scotland, and Ireland, to test the merits of students who are not receiving instruction, and, in the vast majority of cases, are not destined to receive instruction, within the walls of those Universities. It will be noticed that the University of London does not figure in this list; but it must be borne in mind that London has from the first been a *locally examining* body, imposing no term of residence as a condition of academical recognition, and conducting its examinations, for matriculation at least, at several *local centres*. We shall have something to say about the work of this University later on.

At first the Local Examinations were only open to male students under eighteen years of age, but they were extended to female students under eighteen by Cambridge in 1865, and by Oxford in 1870. A further extension of this system took place, by the establishment of Higher Local Examinations by Cambridge, for women above eighteen, in 1869, and for men, in 1874. Lastly, London in 1868 and Oxford in 1876 established examinations for women, which correspond in all respects to those to which regularly matriculated students are subjected for degrees in the faculties of arts and science.

These efforts to bring some at least of the benefits of University training and culture within reach of those whose occupations, or means, or sex preclude them from a University course of study with residence, have met with remarkable success. They have given a direction and stimulus to the work of hundreds of "middle" schools. They have enabled efficient schoolmasters to assert their just claims to recognition against incompetent rivals in those branches of the profession where, for want of searching tests, effrontery has so long held its own against efficiency. They have assisted parents in their efforts to distinguish between good and bad schools. They have been the means of healthfully developing the minds of thousands of the youth of both sexes, by gauging from time to time with the utmost accuracy the amount of real knowledge acquired; and, by exposing superficiality and cram, have led the way to more scientific and less empirical methods of instruction. They have not only unearthed and run to death all the antiquated Mangnalls, Murrays, and Walkinghames, but have been the indirect means of diffusing a knowledge of literature, philology, science, and art in harmony with the latest researches in

those subjects, by creating a market for a new and unrivalled series of text-books, written by the ablest exponents of the several branches of study, at the instigation of the University authorities, expressly to meet the growing demand.

But while these examinations have done all this for middle schools and for the scholars attending those schools, there is another direction in which their influence has only been slightly felt hitherto, but where it would undoubtedly be most beneficial. It is not so widely known as it should be, that in these Local Examinations of students under eighteen, the Universities do not examine *schools*, but individual *scholars*. It is not even necessary for a candidate to be at school; so that it is open to young persons of either sex—whether they are being educated privately, or are employing in self-education leisure moments snatched from some not over-exacting labour—to avail themselves of the help afforded by these examinations for directing, testing, and giving a definite and permanent interest to their private studies. And what is here said as to the partial scope of these oldest of the Local Examinations is obviously altogether true of the later developments of them, in the form of Higher Local Examinations, which invite *adult* students to subject their studies to the test of periodical examination.

As will be gathered from what was said at the commencement of this article, it is largely in the interests of these private students that we are seeking to draw attention to these examinations.

We have already noticed that the movement in favour of Local Examinations arose from a desire to improve what is called middle-class education. To trace the origin of this movement, we must go back nearly fifty years. As early as 1827 the exertions of Lord Brougham and his fellow-philanthropists, who founded the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, had been directed to creating a desire for more scientific culture among the middle classes. The deplorable deficiency of means for their education attracted the attention and engaged the interest of Dr. Arnold, who, in 1832, spoke and wrote upon the importance of providing "something analogous to the advantages afforded to the richer classes by our great public schools and universities." But little or no impression was made upon those most interested in the matter until two important events happening in the same year (1846), and apparently quite independent of one another, combined to arouse their attention to this question of education—these were the Repeal of the Corn Laws, and the passing of the celebrated "Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education." The former, by widening the competition for the supply of the nation's food, opened the eyes of agriculturists to the necessity of more scientific modes of farming, and, consequently, of higher general and scientific training for the farmer, if

he was to hold his own in the competition ; and a similar feeling soon began to show itself among those engaged in trade and manufactures. The latter, by introducing the principle that Government inspection of elementary schools would be henceforth the sole condition of grants in aid, really put the education of the wage-earning classes upon quite a new footing. Already, within the first decade under the new system, the improvement in the education of their labourers and workpeople became sufficiently marked to attract the attention of the employers of labour, and to arouse them to a sense of the deficiencies in the means of education for their own children. "The toe of the peasant came so near the heel" of the farmer as, if not "to gall his kibe," at least to produce considerable uneasiness. So that the impulse that ultimately stirred the middle classes into action was pressure from below. The "bread cast upon the waters" by Lord Brougham and his associates some thirty years before did not "return" until this pressure was felt. The middle classes showed in this respect something of the imperturbable demeanour of the man who was awoke from his sleep by the cry of fire and the intelligence that the wind was blowing his way, but who, finding on inquiry that the fire was seventeen doors off, went to sleep again, and gave orders that he should not be disturbed until it had reached the next door but one. It is curious also, as bearing out what has just been said, that the numbers which have presented themselves for the Universities Local Examinations since 1870 are so largely in excess of the average of the years just preceding that date, as to indicate that a second impulse was given to middle class education by the passing of the Elementary Education Act in that year. The stir and ferment that was made over the question of national education at that time, seems to have aroused afresh the classes above those immediately affected by the movement to a keener sense of their own educational needs.

But there was another direction in which, in 1856, or thereabouts, the shoe was felt to pinch. The receipt of State aid by an increasing number of Parochial and British Schools—which was the result of the legislation of 1846—strengthened their position so greatly as to injure, and ultimately to crush, many of the private adventure schools, in which the children of the middle classes had been in the habit of receiving their education ; while a spirit of independence forbade their making use of the State-aided schools. In this way the middle classes were brought to feel that they were not only being taxed to educate the poor man's children, but were being placed at a disadvantage with regard to the education of their own ; so that to the feeling of uneasiness there was added, in many cases, the sense of injury. Taking advantage of these feelings, some of the philanthropists who had been greatly instrumental in inducing Parliament to give State aid to

elementary schools, conceived the idea of founding middle schools—just as elementary schools had been founded—by private benevolence; and some went so far as to advocate Government inspection for such schools. But they had not calculated the strength of the spirit of independence and dread of interference which has always characterised the middle classes of this country, and so the schemes all fell through. Nothing daunted, however, they set to work to devise a scheme which, while saving the independence of those who needed help, would yet give to the work of middle schools an impulse and a direction which they had hitherto lacked; and, at the same time, supply parents with trustworthy tests by which to distinguish between good schools and bad.

At this juncture the recent experience of the Society of Arts in connection with the work of mechanics' institutes was extremely valuable. These mechanics' institutes had been started throughout the country to afford the adult artisan a means of general and technical instruction; and, in 1852, the Society invited them to affiliate themselves to it. Then, going a step further, it proposed, in 1854, to hold examinations locally for all members of these institutes, and to grant certificates of competency in a great variety of subjects to all who passed its examinations. The first examination was held in 1856, with complete success; and the hint thus given was taken up and acted upon by Mr. T. D. Acland, Mr. Temple (now Bishop of Exeter), Mr. (now Canon) Brereton, and others who were working with them for the advancement of education among the middle classes. At the instigation of Mr. Acland, the Bath and West of England Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture, Art, Manufactures, and Commerce, founded a prize-scheme, and invited West of England schools to send in competitors. The scheme met with a most favourable reception from both parents and school-masters; and 106 candidates, divided into two groups—seniors, those above fifteen, and juniors, under fifteen—presented themselves from grammar-schools, colleges, and private seminaries for the first examination in 1857. A Board of Examiners was formed, and the services of Mr. Temple and Mr. Bowstead, two of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Elementary Schools, were secured by the co-operation of the Education Department, Whitehall. It was felt, however, that for placing such examinations upon a permanent basis, and applying them generally to the whole country, it was absolutely necessary that they should be conducted by a universally-recognised examining body. Some turned to the Government Education Department, only to discover that Government inspection for middle schools was impracticable. An appeal to the Universities appeared to give greater promise of success. Accordingly, Mr. Temple urged upon

Oxford, and Mr. Harvey Goodwin (now Bishop of Carlisle) upon Cambridge. the importance of constituting themselves the Board of Examiners for the purpose of testing periodically the work of middle schools, and putting their seal of approval upon all that was good, and sound, and thorough in such work. It was argued—and the argument has certainly gained in force and in readier acceptance since—"that though classical scholarship and higher mathematics could not be cultivated to any great extent by those who were destined to go into business at the early age of eighteen; yet that there were evidences of an increasing disposition on the part of the middle classes to recognise in the elementary study of languages and of mathematical reasoning a better preparation for the practical occupations of life than what had hitherto passed under the name of commercial education." It was represented that the publicity given to the results of the University Examination and to the reports of the Examiners, would be the means of setting a common standard of excellence, besides giving parents most valuable hints as to what was best for their children to learn, and how it should best be taught.

The Universities readily and graciously accepted the new duty; the only questions of detail which at all provoked discussion, or brought out strong differences of opinion, were two—that of the examination in religious knowledge, and of the title which was proposed to be conferred upon successful senior candidates. The latter question was boldly faced by Oxford, and resulted in the creation of a new title, "A.A.," or "Associate in Arts," not, however, without vigorous opposition on the part of some who thought the old-established degree-title of B.A. would suffer by the introduction. How singularly the prophecies of both sides in this controversy have been falsified by events will appear hereafter. Cambridge determined to keep clear of the rock which at one time almost threatened to wreck the Oxford scheme, and decided to confer no title at all, but only to award certificates. The former question—that of examination in religious knowledge—did not prove so formidable as at first sight might have been apprehended. The University Acts, which had just passed, had removed the exclusive theological tests which had kept anything like a tolerant spirit towards Nonconformity well away from the walls of the Colleges; and the legal admission of Nonconformists into the corporation of the Universities enabled them to deal with the theological part of the new examinations in a more liberal spirit than would have been consistent with their former constitution. The regulations of this part of the local examinations, as ultimately agreed upon, will be fully given later on.

All the other details having been satisfactorily arranged, the first

examination under their new statutes was fixed by Oxford to be held in June, 1858, and by Cambridge in December of the same year; and they have been held annually at these times by both Universities ever since, so that each University has held nineteen examinations up to this moment. The results, however, of the examination just held by Cambridge (December, 1876) have not yet transpired; so the statistics which follow include nineteen examinations by Oxford, and eighteen by Cambridge. We are dealing now only with the local examinations for students under sixteen (juniors), and under eighteen (seniors), and shall refer hereafter to the Higher Local Examinations for those above eighteen.

The last Oxford Examination was held at thirty local centres, that of Cambridge at eighty-two, exclusive of Colonial centres. In 1858, 1,151 candidates presented themselves for the Oxford Examination, and 370 for the Cambridge. In 1875-6, the respective figures for Oxford and Cambridge were 2,090 and 4,117 presented, or nearly $4\frac{1}{2}$ times as many as in the first year of these examinations. With reference to the remarks made above as to the effect upon middle class education of the discussion upon, and passing of, the Elementary Education Act of 1870, it will be interesting to note that the average number examined yearly by the two Universities since 1870 was 5,132, as against an average of 2,748 per annum for the five years previous to that date.

In the whole thirty-seven examinations, 57,250 candidates have presented themselves, and 36,107 have passed. Of these, 26,099 presented and 16,072 passed are credited to Oxford, and 31,151 presented and 20,029 passed, to Cambridge.

It will be seen from these figures that, on an average, 61 out of every 100 presented have passed the Oxford Examination, and 64 out of every 100, that of Cambridge. The highest percentage of passes obtained in any one year by Oxford candidates was 68.5 per cent., by Cambridge, 81; the lowest being 52.2 and 53 per cent. respectively. These figures seem to indicate that the Cambridge standard has been slightly lower than that of Oxford. The Cambridge Examination has certainly been for the last ten years the more popular examination of the two, the number of candidates at the last Cambridge Examination having been nearly double that of Oxford. No doubt, minor differences in the requirements of the two examinations, and the different times at which they are held, may account, to a slight extent, for the difference in their popularity; but in the face of these figures, one cannot help concluding that school-masters have instinctively felt their way to the fact that the Cambridge Examination is the easier to pass of the two.

The above figures include students of both sexes; and to those who

are engaged in efforts to improve the education of girls it will be specially interesting to know that, of the 6,217 candidates presented at the last examinations of the two Universities, 2,060, or just one-third, were girls. The percentage of passes of girls is, on the whole, slightly, but very slightly, less than that of boys.

We propose to continue this subject by giving the substance of the regulations which have been adopted by the Universities, together with an outline of the programmes of the several Local Examinations.

A HIGH-CHURCH SCHEME OF LITURGICAL REVISION.

IF, as we are sometimes told, we live in the midst of illusions, we are certainly never without iconoclasts who do their best to destroy them. The Ritualists, for example, seem to have a special pleasure in work of this kind. In our youthful days a Church service, even of the lowest type, had a certain effect on our imagination. We cannot say that it stimulated devotion, but there was to our mind—accustomed to the simplest and baldest of Dissenting services, as they were thirty years ago—something imposing, if not impressive, in the unfamiliar ritual even of an Evangelical church. It did not attract us, it did not strike us as specially devout, but it had a certain influence—æsthetic it must have been—which, however, would probably have been lost if we had become more accustomed to it. But we have long since learned that any feeling of this kind was irrational. There are few things against which the High Church party have directed so many sarcasms as the “three-decker” and its accompaniments; and they have been so far successful that there are few churches, even of the Evangelical school, where the congregations are satisfied with a service which was once regarded as solemn and impressive, until Ritualists set to work to expose the hollowness of its pretensions and to exhibit its bald and un-catholic character.

There was a time, too—not very long distant—when a Bishop, and still more an Archbishop, was supposed to be an object of affectionate regard and deference to all his clergy except a few, who gave sufficient proof of their own unworthiness by their unfilial conduct towards their spiritual father. The outward show of this is still kept up; but the Ritualists have done, and are doing, their best to destroy the reality. No doubt, if a Bishop will accept their views of the Church and Church law—will tolerate all their vagaries, and give them promotion in despite of them all, and, still more, will do battle on behalf of what they are pleased to call Catholic principles—he will be lauded to the skies. But prelates of this type are not common; and consequently the Bench in

general, and certain specially-obnoxious members of it in particular, are the objects of incessant and unsparing attack, very unreasonable, very truculent, and extremely vulgar. The lingering influence of the old sentiment is seen in the ardent desire for the increase of the episcopate, than which nothing can well be more inconsistent. If, indeed, we were to believe the representations of the advocates for the creation of some new see, we should conclude that the great power of the Anglican Establishment lay in her Bishops; and that the chief desideratum, in order to an extension of her influence, was an addition to their number. If, on the other hand, we take a file of the *Church Times* and run through its references to Bishops, or even collate the speeches of bold Ritualists on the same fertile theme for denunciation, we should be forced to regard their lordships as a source of weakness, disunion, and trouble of every kind. Anyone, indeed, who was desirous to have a copious and effective vocabulary of abuse, could not do better than to make a collection of Ritualist sayings about the Bishops. One of the latest manifestations of the spirit of the party is the refusal of the defendant, in one of the appeals from Lord Penzance, to carry the case to the Judicial Committee if the Primate is to be one of the episcopal assessors. A more flagrant insult could hardly have been offered to a public man. That an archbishop should be its subject, and that it should have proceeded from a clergyman understood to be acting on the advice of the English Church Union, gives it a special significance. The whole affair prompts an inquiry as to whom these "Catholic" clergy would obey. They declaim against the supremacy of the State, from which they are nevertheless content to accept exclusive privileges, and refuse to be bound by the judgment of secular courts in spiritual matters. If they are resolved still further to set aside the authority of Bishops who are not to their taste, we are at a loss to see to whom their obedience is to be rendered. In short, they are disillusioning the world of any belief in episcopal rule as a bond of union or a guarantee for order.

Hitherto, however, the Prayer-Book has been proof against their attacks. A good many innovations have been made in the service, and especially at what are styled High celebrations in Ritualistic churches; but the Liturgy itself has still been treated with becoming reverence. The prayers are often mumbled, but their use is still retained. We on the outside, indeed, have always been led to believe that by Churchmen of all classes the Book of Common Prayer was held equally sacred. We knew, of course, that some ardent Protestants desired a revision, with the view of omitting some objectionable passages and altering others which were somewhat ambiguous; but we knew also they were a minority, even among Evangelicals. Our fancy was, that in the eyes of

an overwhelming majority of Churchmen the Prayer-Book was second only to the Bible, and that it was a sacred ark of the Covenant, not a single timber or nail in which must be touched. How often have we listened to eloquent eulogiums on its marvellous wisdom—a wisdom so surprising as to suggest the thought that it must have been the product of Divine inspiration! How often have we been invited to contemplate its fertility and variety, its simple and chastened style, its remarkable blending of devout spiritual feeling with a sobriety of expression which commands the sympathy of practical men, who would turn away in disgust from mystical raptures! How often have we heard those eccentric Dissenters—happily, not very numerous—who fancy that they exhibit their charity by decrying all that belongs to their own Church and exalting the Establishment, aping this habit of Churchmen, and even going beyond them in extravagant laudations of the Liturgy. They, indeed, have rarely gone so far as to include the Catechism in their praise; but Churchmen have never practised such reticence. Even those who must sometimes have been disturbed at the possible effects of its sacramental teaching upon young minds have swallowed any such scruples, and upheld the Catechism as a valuable manual of Christian doctrine. We believe if the Catechism could have been accepted as a formulary to be used in Board-Schools, we might have had a settlement of the vexed Educational controversy. In short, it has always been a fetich among Churchmen, who might or might not approve of all it contained, but who accepted it as an authoritative document of their Church, and held it up accordingly as an object for national pride and glory.

The last thing we should have suspected was, that underneath all this seeming reverence for Church formularies there lurked a spirit of discontent, and that it had extended to High Churchmen. But we are disenchanted. We learn now that the Prayer-Book and Catechism, to which we have been taught to look with envy and reverence, are far from being a desirable inheritance, after all. While there are Dissenters who dream that they could improve their own service by the introduction of the national Liturgy, it is now seen that there are Churchmen who see in it all kinds of defects and evils. Had those who take this view been Evangelicals, it would have been intelligible. The difficulty is to understand how any of the true Protestant teachers in the Establishment can reconcile themselves to formularies which come directly across the principles which they inculcate in their sermons—how men who insist in the pulpit that Baptism profiteth nothing can at the font give thanks to God for the regeneration He has wrought in the child just baptized—how they who repudiate all priestly claims can, even by implication, accept the trust committed to them in the Ordination Charge of the Bishop, and, still more, how they can practically exercise

it by using the form of Absolution in the Visitation of the Sick—or how they who insist on the necessity of a true faith and a holy life can give thanks at the grave of a reprobate for the hope that is cherished as to his eternal future. If Evangelicals had raised a new protest against these and other points in the Prayer-Book, and had sought their alteration, it would certainly not have been wonderful. But they are quiet, and the demand for revision comes from the opposite quarter.

It is from the *Church Quarterly Review* that the cry proceeds, and if we are to judge by the decided and confident tone with which it is uttered, there must be a large and influential party bent on giving it effect. The *Review* does not represent the more advanced section of High Churchmen. It is, indeed, sufficiently pronounced, but its position is that of Mr. Beresford-Hope rather than that of Mr. Thomas Layman and the fiery zealots of St. Albans. It speaks, too, with a sense of responsibility, and in a tone of courtesy such as we do not find in the *Church Times* and *Church Review*, and its representations and proposals are entitled to a respect which we should not pay to the "heedless rhetoric" of these journals. In fact, it is the organ of High Church respectability and moderation, and must be dealt with accordingly. The Reviewer starts with the assumption that a revision of the Liturgy there must be. There may be arguments *pro* and *con*—there may even be serious dangers to face in undertaking a work on which every party in the Church will claim to have its say, and possibly, on the whole, a sound policy would dictate indefinite postponement. But it cannot be, for revision "is already upon us; it is actually being worked out piecemeal, and not very wisely, and it is inevitable, for a reason not yet named," that reason being the changed condition of the Anglican Church and the work its clergy have to do. To those who have not closely observed the gradual revolution which has been going on in the Church, it will be a surprise to find how far she has already departed from the standard of half a century ago, while those who would fain preserve its Protestant character will be startled to note the direction in which those changes for the most part are tending.

"The New Lectionary of 1871, the Shortened Services Act, the debates in the Convocation of Canterbury on the Rubrical amendments—none of them marked by any sufficient care or knowledge, and all fraught with at least the possibility of serious consequences—are examples of formal and recognised inroads on the Act of Uniformity; while such practical, though unauthorised additions to the scanty group of Anglican formularies as the Three Hours' Devotion, Harvest Thanksgivings, Public Institution of Incumbents, Ordination of Readers and Deaconesses, and Children's Services prove incontestably that the narrow limits of the Common Prayer-Book are no longer adequate for the spiritual needs of the Church of England."

If the Act of Uniformity is to be thus quietly set aside, and the formularies of the National Church gradually transformed, it is high time that the attention of the nation was directed to it. We fully agree with the writer that if "the process of revision is actually going on piecemeal, and with no very intelligent survey of the bearings as a preliminary to any one instalment," it is absolutely necessary that there should be a thorough examination of the whole subject. He of course writes as though the feelings of the clergy and the members of the Establishment alone had to be consulted, and even among them, those chiefly if not exclusively, who have decided Church principles. But while the Church claims to be the National Church, and is recognised as such, the nation must have a voice on all such questions. It may be true that "the Anglican communion is no longer the religious system of a mere moiety of the population of the southern part of one small island, but a powerful federation of Churches spread over Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australasia, and Polynesia, and ministering to flocks widely diverse in culture, in language, in habits, and in race," and that may be a very good reason why it should renounce the idea of being a National Establishment, and covet rather the higher glory of a great spiritual body. But so long as it holds its present position, it must conform itself to the national will, even though in doing so it should unfit itself for the fulfilment of the nobler destiny which may seem to be opening before it. It is, no doubt, very mortifying to devoted Churchmen to have their action thus fettered, but they can easily escape the restraints. Independence and freedom are easily attainable, but not in combination with exclusive privilege. The Church cannot, at the same time, be free and yet national. So long as it continues national the people, through the Legislature, must have a controlling voice in relation to any changes which may be suggested, and it is for them to consider not merely the expediency of some isolated suggestion, but the general drift of the alterations which are sought, and indeed are being gradually accomplished. Those mentioned above, to which Legislative sanction has been given, are harmless, probably beneficial. But if the results of the rubrical tinkering, on which Convocation has spent so much time, are to be authorised, and still more if the innovations, such as the Three Hours' Devotion, and others which have been foisted into the services of some churches, and are already beginning to be accepted, are to be legalised, a very decided advance Romeward will have been accomplished, and the opinion of the nation must first be expressed upon them.

We have had a great deal too much tall talk about the Church and its claims. It is time that the rights of the nation were acknowledged. The people certainly do not want Ritualism, or even High Churchism. The

vast majority of the supporters of the Establishment are content with things as they are, and have little patience with those who are given to change. Least of all do they wish for such reactionary change as that advocated in the article before us. They would be glad enough, as the decided feeling relative to the Public Worship Regulation Act showed, if some phrases and forms which seem to lend a sanction to Ritualism could be expunged or altered; but they shrink from the possible risks of an attempt to make changes which they esteem desirable. The position is actually this. Those among the supporters of the Establishment whose sympathy and help alone are of any practical value to it are deterred from attempting any concession to popular Protestantism by the fear of danger to the Establishment. The sacerdotalists, on the other side, understanding fully the influence of this dread, presume upon it and press their encroachments further and further. They threaten that the alteration of a single Rubric in a sense adverse to them will be followed by a secession which must bring about the collapse of the Establishment, and are equally menacing as to the result of any attempt to refuse by law the revolution which they are engaged in effecting. If some decided action be taken they will Romanise the Church by trading on the peace of those who seek first the safety of the Establishment.

Before glancing at the actual proposals which are made by the Reviewer, it will be instructive to note the confessions he makes as to the baldness or inadequacy of the formularies which we have been in the habit of hearing so much belauded. In 1867, the late Primate said that "the Church of England puts into the hands of her members a form of sound words suited for every occasion on which the servants of God join together in acts of combined adoration." It was a lofty boast, conceived in that optimist spirit which the atmosphere of Canterbury is so well calculated to foster, but it is one which a large body of the adherents of the Establishment would have been ready to adopt. If so much of the admiration expressed in such expressions were not absolutely unreflecting, the Archbishop himself might have paused when he remembered that "the very ceremony he was then and there engaged in performing, the dedication of a church, has never had a place in the Reformed Prayer-Book at all." It is rather too bad, however, to be severe on poor Dr. Longley for indulging in this glorification of the Liturgy, and to quote the incident as "exhibiting with much force the exact degree of intelligent attention which dignitaries of Archbishop Longley's school, thought, and still think, necessary for inquiry before pronouncing dogmatically on difficult ecclesiastical questions of the day." The truth is, any excellent divine who had passed from the palace at Ripon to Bishop Auckland, and thence to Lambeth, was sure to look with kindly eyes on

the Prayer-Book, and to utter those easy and pleasant things which at one time were so acceptable to Churchmen, and were continually addressed to Dissenters in a tone of triumphant superiority.

Old times are changed ; new ideas, or rather dead mediæval ideas galvanised into the semblance of new life, are abroad ; the things which were once pleasant and beautiful have lost their attraction ; the hands of the iconoclast are laid upon that which was once held to be most sacred, and High Churchmen adopt a style of criticism more befitting Dissenters. Thus, beginning with the masses of the artisans congregated in great towns, and with the "considerable part of the rural population, which is in a state of sheer heathen ignorance as to religion and morals, and that seemingly not bettered but rather worsened by such influence as Primitive Methodism exerts, whether in Cornwall or Yorkshire," we are told that "it is clearly impractical to offer home or foreign pagans the refined and intellectual Book of Common Prayer, and it only as their guide, and manual of devotion." The *naïveté* of this statement is charming, its impudence is simply astounding. For some reason, the High Church party have recently been making a dead set at Primitive Methodism. One of the main objects of the "new crusade" which has been preached by the *Church Times*, and in which pupil-teachers are to play a conspicuous part, is to assail Primitive Methodism, which is said to be not only irreligious but immoral ; and the same bitter and uncharitable temper marks the reference to it above. Perhaps the clergy are jealous of its influence over a class of the people which the Church neglected for centuries, but they could be guilty of no more egregious mistake than to fancy its power will be weakened by such unworthy and untrue insinuations. The only effect is to awaken sympathy on behalf of an earnest and self-denying body of men, who have sought to cultivate in their own fashion and by their own methods a great field which the clergy, who now turn round to reproach them, would have left a waste and a wilderness. Men must be insensible to any feelings of shame who can quietly talk of a great class which had been committed to the care of their Church as beings in a "state of sheer heathen ignorance" without a solitary word expressive of humiliation or regret. But when, not content with this, they pour their scorn upon noble workers who have come in to repair their *laches*, we are at a loss for words in which to express our righteous indignation. The neglect was a sufficient crime, without adding to it such shameless calumnies. The intensity of the hostile feeling may, however, help us to form some estimate of the power which Primitive Methodism exercises in the rural districts, and of the fear which it inspires in those who know that it will be hostile to the Establishment.

But what a confession is this as to the want of adaptation in the

Liturgy to the very class for whom the Establishment is supposed to make special provision! The beautiful visions which have been so often conjured up before our imagination by the eloquent words of Church defenders, dissolve at once into thin air. Instead of peaceful and happy villages, where a population, trained in religious truth and moulded by the kindly influences of educated Christian gentlemen, supplies an irrefutable proof of the value of an Establishment, we have a body of ignorant pagans. Instead of churches filled by congregations whose joy it is to unite in the simple responsive worship of the Prayer-Book which they love, and who are thus freed from the listlessness which long and dull extemporaneous prayers must produce, or from the temptation to wild sensationalism which lurks in the too fervid sentiment of others, we have a picture of stolid peasants, to whom the Prayer-Book is at once a marvel and a puzzle. "The mere mechanical difficulty of finding the places is enough to baffle most of them, without the additional perplexity of trying to understand the matter when found." We rub our eyes after reading this, and wonder whether we have not been in dreamland. Can this, we ask, be the Prayer-Book for indifference to whose transcendent merits Dissenters have been so often reproached? Can it be the book which was forced upon every parish in England by means of Five-Mile Acts, Conventicle Acts, and all the pains and penalties which they inflicted on all who were unable to discern its value? More than two hundred years ago it was made the manual of devotion for the nation, and two thousand godly men were expelled from their churches because they would not bow down to this idol which the Parliament and Church of those times set up. Now, we are told—and told, let it be observed, by those who are still profiting by the Parliamentary authority given to the book—that it does not meet the wants of the common people, who know not how to find its prayers, and cannot understand them when found.

The Catechism comes in for condemnation equally emphatic and strong :—

"There is, perhaps, no part of the Prayer-Book which needs to be both supplemented and extended more than the Catechism. . . It is at least hard to believe that if we had possessed a *complete* Catechism, such a large proportion of children brought up in Church schools would drop away to Dissent, as actually do so. As it is, our children are not taught to answer the two questions, 'Why am I a Christian, and not an infidel?' and 'Why am I a Churchman, and not a Dissenter?'"

This criticism on the Catechism indicates what the writer is really aiming at. He would have the Church make its formularies more Churchy, more Romish, more mediæval. He looks back with wistful regret on the losses which were suffered at the Reformation, and

would fain recover them. The compilers of the Prayer-Book have attempted the impossible task of compressing into one book the "Missal, the Breviary, the Ritual, the Pontifical, and the Enchiridion," and every part of their work is necessarily incomplete. The time is come when their work should be revised, "following as our examples the Reformers of 1533, and sedulously shunning those of 1552."

We will not weary our readers by leading them through the tangled path of liturgical discussion into which the Reviewer has plunged. They would not be deeply interested by a review of the loss which the Church has sustained by the surrender of the service of the Little Hours, or a consideration of the extent to which the Breviary may be restored. They will probably be astonished to learn from such a source that "one of the great weaknesses of the Prayer-Book is in its Collects, whose number is relatively very small, and whose provision for particular needs is highly inadequate," though, doubtless, they will fully assent to the proposition to supplement the alleged deficiency from the 568 Ancient Collects which Canon Bright has collected, or the 688 contained in the Priest's Prayer-Book. They will be puzzled rather than interested by questions as to the comparative loss or gain arising from the fusion of Matins, Laud, and Prime, or of Vespers and Complines, and possibly may not be so impressed with the value of a short intercalary Antiphon or Respond as the Reviewer evidently is. But they will easily understand the aim of most of the proposals which are made, however indisposed or unable to enter into the various liturgical questions which are started. When it is suggested that the Lectionary should include readings from the biographies or writings of the most eminent Christians, thus dimming the line of separation between Holy Scripture and Church tradition; that special services should be framed for the consecration of church furniture and utensils; that provision should be made for the "Apostolic, if not Divine, institution of Unction of the Sick, which might have been reformed instead of abolished, and after which the Tunkers and Peculiar People are wistfully groping" (how Catholic a spirit must that be which takes thought for Tunkers and Peculiar People, even though it may have little sympathy with Primitive Methodists!); that the Black Rubric on kneeling at the Communion Service should be abolished, and the Sacrament reserved for sick communion; that a number of new Saints' days should be added to the calendar, and that the way be prepared for a gradual introduction of prayers for the dead;—it is not necessary to show what this revision would signify. The remarkable feature of the whole is that these suggestions, all of them distinctly intended to give the service a more mediæval character, and to make it resemble as much as possible that of the first Prayer-Book of Edward VI., or the Sarum

Use, proceed from a *Review* which can hardly be regarded as extreme. There need not be a better evidence of the essential agreement between the two sections of the High Church party. The moderate men would move more slowly, but they are advancing towards the same goal, and in the process of development which is going on so rapidly, the moderate are ever continually found occupying positions from which their extreme friends have marched on to more advanced ground.

That it should be thought possible by men who may be supposed to be of sane mind, and to have some knowledge of things around them, to effect this mediæval restoration in the services of the Church, is itself a sign of the times. Even ten years ago such proposals would have been received only with a shout of contemptuous laughter. It is evident, however, that the Reviewer is not a wild dreamer, and that the last idea in his mind is that his project belongs to the abortive schemes of Utopia. The article is only one revelation among many of the arrogant and audacious spirit of the High Church clergy, who have come to believe that they control the Church, and the Church the nation. Possibly the recent School-Board election in the metropolis may prove a necessary and useful check. It certainly has not come an hour too soon, and if it teach them to moderate their tone and to remember that they are English clergymen of the nineteenth, and not Spanish priests of the sixteenth century, even they may derive profit from an adversity which cannot be joyous but grievous. They must certainly have been intoxicated by a belief in Tory supremacy and Church right before anyone who could claim to represent them would have ventured to unmask such projects as those we have been considering. What the nation wants in the Prayer-Book is more Protestantism, not less. There are multitudes who maintain their allegiance to the Anglican Church because they hope—certainly in opposition to common sense, as well as against hope—that a revision will be effected in a Protestant sense. Such men ought to learn something from the coolness with which the Reviewer takes “it for granted that the religious sense of the nation will continue to reject, as it has hitherto rejected, the efforts of the Liturgical Revision Society to mutilate the Baptismal Office, the Visitation of the Sick, and the Ordinal.” On this point, too, he is unquestionably right. We heard of a distinguished politician recently telling one of the Bishops that the first attempt at change of that kind would bring the Establishment toppling down as a house of cards; and he would be a bold man who should venture on a task so difficult as that of reform, even though he were backed by an undoubted majority of the laity of the Church. But hitherto it has been believed that, at least, the *status quo* would be maintained, and that if the clergy were strong enough to defeat all attempts to secure a Protestant revision of the formularies,

they would not provoke the nation by endeavouring to strengthen the sacerdotal and sacramentarian elements in the Prayer-Book. It is clear now that this is too sanguine a view, and that it will need strenuous resolve if a strong reaction is to be prevented.

For the present, indeed, it is suggested that any changes should be optional. Two hundred years ago Sheldon and the High Churchmen of his day insisted on uniformity in order to expel Puritanism from the Church.† Now their successors would set it aside in order that they may admit a semi-Romanism within the pale. "The preliminary condition essential to any amicable settlement is the frank abandonment of the chimera of an absolutely rigid uniformity, which the authorities of the Church of England have pursued with but little wisdom and less profit from the first statute of Uniformity in 1549 till the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874." Repentance may be tardy, but it need not be too late, if it proves its sincerity by its fruits. The strainings after Uniformity have certainly led to the perpetration of great crimes, and the infliction of gross injustice. But if even after the lapse of centuries the error is seen and renounced, the memory of it may gradually pass away, provided the unrighteous gains derived from it are surrendered also. If uniformity is to be set aside in the National Church, the wish of the nation must be taken into account; and it will teach the clergy, if they do not learn it themselves, that, in tearing up the Act of Uniformity, they are destroying their only title-deed to their status and property.



ECCESTASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

THE London School-Board election was, like Inkerman, a grand soldiers' battle and victory. Popular enthusiasm carried the day, and inflicted on the clerical party the most serious defeat it has sustained for years. To do them justice, the vanquished do not attempt to deny the severity of the reverse they have sustained. They do their best to explain it, and, true to the policy they have pursued throughout the contest, do not hesitate to make the most unscrupulous—not to say mendacious—assertions as to the means by which the success was achieved. But, with their numbers reduced to eighteen, and with some of these eager to repudiate responsibility for the tactics of the party, it is impossible not to confess themselves beaten. It seems a pity to deny them such solace as they are able to derive from the cock-and-bull stories which are inserted in Church papers and are imposed upon the credulous correspondents of country newspapers. If, indeed, they

had contented themselves with general statements that the battle had been won by means of a lavish expenditure, they might safely have been left to find their own level ; but when they descend to particulars, and fix upon the Liberation Society as the paymaster, asserting that it spent not less than £300 in cabs alone, it is necessary to meet such monstrous fictions with an unqualified denial. Undoubtedly, the Liberation Society carries off a good share of the spoils of victory ; but, beyond the issue of a circular, it had nothing to do with fighting the battle. Some of its members were prominent actors in the struggle ; but that was only in their individual capacity, and not as representatives of the Society, which has profited by the result solely because it pleased the Bishop of London and the Clergy to stake the fortunes of their Church on the issue. They did, in fact, ask the metropolis for a vote of confidence in them, and the result was the all but unbroken "No" which came from every district. Some of the defeated have complained of the cumulative vote, and endeavoured to impose upon the world the transparent fallacy that, though the friends of the Board had more votes, its enemies could boast of more voters. Of course, the thing was impossible, except on the absurd supposition that the latter had only given a certain portion of their votes to the cause they wished to support. The truth is, that but for the cumulative vote the clerical party would not have had half a dozen members on the new Board. In Southwark only did one of their candidates head the poll, and that was due entirely to exceptional circumstances. It is not wonderful that both friends and foes regard such an issue as extremely significant, and that it should be assumed that the Society which gains so much by the result must have contributed largely to bring it about.

As a matter of fact, however, it did nothing of the kind, and the victory is to be explained in a much simpler way. Except in a few cases, it was due mainly to the personal popularity and influence of the candidates, several of whom were new and comparatively unknown. The party, too, owed very little to the metropolitan daily press. Towards the close of the contest, the *Times* gave unmistakable signs of the set of public opinion, and in one or two trenchant articles the coming event cast its shadows before ; but the *Daily News*, though sound and loyal enough, never seemed to appreciate the full importance of the struggle. The *Echo*, under its new management, did gallant and spirited service ; and the *Telegraph* adhered to its old Liberalism, instead of obeying the Tory impulses which guide it on the Eastern Question. The *Spectator* stood aloof, and said little—and that little not encouraging—till the close of the contest, when, with its usual perverted ingenuity, it sought to find support for some of its own crotchets from facts which prove exactly the reverse, and was apparently more troubled

by the defeat of Mr. Oakley than gratified by the success of the Liberal party. Some of the journals which circulate chiefly among the working classes adopted a much more decided course, and did much to produce the strong feeling among the artisans which was one great secret of the marvellous success. Not that the middle class were apathetic; for the detailed returns of the poll show that in many of the suburban districts—especially in Surrey, where Toryism was rampant in 1874—majorities were obtained by the School-Board candidates. The battle was in most cases fought as between Conservative and Liberal, and those did not fare best who ignored this view of it. "We were much assisted," says a Chelsea correspondent of the *Spectator*, "by the general discredit into which the Conservative party has lately fallen, the local leaders of that party and of the opposition to the School-Board being conspicuously the same." In confirmation of this statement, it may be added that an unknown Radical headed the poll, whereas a colourless supporter of the Board, though having all the prestige of personal popularity and former success, was the third on a poll which in 1873 he led with an overwhelming majority. This could not have been but for the thorough awakening of the working-men. They did not stand alone, but they contributed a very large proportion of the victorious army. In every way is this satisfactory. The interest which it indicates in the work of education, and their manifest superiority to the unworthy feelings on which the opponents of the Board have been playing for months past, are gratifying not only in themselves, but because of the confidence they inspire as to their future action. The power is certainly in their hands, and their success on this occasion will give them a consciousness of this fact, which was sure to come, but which they do not seem fully to have realised before. It would have been melancholy if, at the same time, they had shown a disposition to yield themselves to the sway of the mere catchwords which have been so rife during the election, and which were framed for the express object of imposing upon them. Their manly and intelligent resolve not to listen to the specious and seductive pleas by which they were assailed, and to stand firmly by those who were doing a great public work, is a hopeful sign for all friends of progress. It is well, however, that Liberal leaders should learn the lesson it teaches, as well as accept the encouragement it gives. The true moral of the victory in our view is, that great electoral victories can now be won only by popular enthusiasm, and this can only be aroused when there is something worth fighting for.

It is curious to note how fond are clerical orators, and other Church defenders, of proclaiming their indifference to the attacks of the Liberation Society, and how certain they are, perhaps in the next breath, to

betray the secret fear they have relative to the Establishment. From the Bishop of Manchester downwards, they are all equally contemptuous of the efforts of Dissenters, and equally anxious that the end which they seek may be accomplished, though not by them. We should certainly be the last to deny them any pleasure they can derive from such a reflection. We fully agree with the *British Quarterly* in its recent article: "Few things would in our estimation be more unfortunate than that such a revolution [as Disestablishment] should be so effected as to be a mere sectarian triumph. . . . To us, therefore, it is a subject for rejoicing, not regret, that Nonconformists will never be able to humiliate their ecclesiastical rivals by depriving them of the unfair advantages they have enjoyed for centuries. The nation, including a very large proportion of Churchmen, must be satisfied that justice requires the change before it can be effected, and it is on every ground desirable that it should be so." The most striking phenomenon of the present times is the way in which numbers of Churchmen are reconciling themselves to Disestablishment, as at least a *dernier ressort*, or are unconsciously preparing the way for it. Canon Gregory belongs to the latter class. He certainly has no leanings towards religious equality; indeed, he seems to look jealously on the liberty which Dissenters have already acquired. In a recent address at Liverpool, after speaking of the negligence of the Church in past times, he said: "Nonconformity under these circumstances acquired an undue share of political power, and obtained equality with the Church in regard to civil and religious privileges." We are so accustomed to the Canon's astounding inaccuracy, that we are as little surprised by this statement as by his suggestion that we are seeking a share in the Church's endowments. But it shows that he at least thinks we have got too much. Unintentionally, however, he is working for our ends. He is afraid of what School-Boards, with their "secular and undefined religious education," will do. We feel sure that the wisest defenders of the Establishment are much more anxious as to what he and his friends are doing. Let the programme he hinted at in his Liverpool speech be carried out, by the clergy refusing obedience to any legal tribunal, and the end will not be far distant. The Canon thinks that the difficulty would be settled if Parliament would confirm the decisions of Convocation, that is, if the Legislature would endorse the views of the Sacerdotalists who dominate in the Jerusalem Chamber. If that be the only solution, he had better at once make up his mind that escape from the present difficulties is impossible, except by breaking the tie which at present binds the Church to the State.

To this point his friends, as represented by the E. C. U., are rapidly forcing the controversy. Mr. Tooth defies the law, and the Union

supports him. It paused before adopting the decisive resolution proposed by Dr. W. F. Phillimore at its recent meeting ; but it was evident that the majority was in favour of it, and the delay seems to have been chiefly on technical grounds. A meeting is to be held between Christmas and Lent, and then the following proposition is to be considered:—

“ This meeting declares that in its judgment any sentence of suspension or inhibition pronounced by any court sitting under the Public Worship Regulation Act is *spiritually* null and void, and that, should any priest feel it to be his duty to continue to discharge his spiritual functions notwithstanding such sentence, he is hereby assured of the sympathy of the meeting, and of such support and assistance as the circumstances of the case may allow.”

To pass this would be nothing less than to unfurl a flag of revolt, and in truth its advocates seem quite prepared for this. Strong words were the order of the day. Time will show what weight is to be attached to them. Dr. West pointed to the example of Dr. Guthrie, and his bold utterance : “ I shall put the interdict under my feet, and preach the Gospel.” But then Dr. Guthrie had made up his mind to accept the necessary consequences : have Dr. West and his allies reached the same point ?

From an entirely different side, the Rev. J. Oakley, the able and popular Rector of St. Saviour's, Hoxton, approaches this question of Disestablishment, and bears a very striking testimony as to one of the worst results of the present system. In an evil hour for himself he consented to be one of the Church candidates for the School-Board, although his views were evidently more in sympathy with the policy of the Board, than with that of his own nominal allies. As might be expected, he found himself in a very embarrassing situation, and has reason to be thankful that he was defeated. Indeed, he says he feels it a relief “ not to find myself the representative of men whom I must have displeased, and who would have been soon found calling me a traitor.” Of course, the question which starts to every lip is, Why accept a candidature which could not but expose him to misconstruction on all sides ? With beautiful simplicity he says : “ It is surely unfair to say that I am not at liberty to recommend Sir Charles Reed to my friends because I criticise some of the acts of the Board of which he was chairman.” If he had said “ Because I am the candidate of a party which is asking London to condemn Sir Charles and the Board together,” he would have been nearer the truth, but he would also have exhibited the flagrant inconsistency of his conduct. But he manifestly sought to do his duty as a chivalrous gentleman to his Church, and we have no desire to be severe upon an error committed we believe with perfect conscientiousness. What interests us is the light

which he has received from the events of the election as to the evil and danger of the unhappy antagonism between Church and Dissent. "Let me only add (he says) an expression of the deepest conviction that this hostility between Church and Dissent which has come out strikingly in the late election *must* cease, if our civilisation is not to be seriously retarded, and our place lowered in the scale of nations." Exactly so. This is what the advocates of the Liberation Society have been long saying; but while Dissenters only were the victims of the miserable distinctions which a State Church creates, their remonstrances were unheeded. Now the shoe pinches others, and when Churchmen are defeated, they smart under the "hostility and suspicion" with which they have been pursued, and which they regard as the "legacy of many generations of prejudice and antagonism." None, we are told, "feel it so acutely as the modern generation of the thoughtful working clergy." We fully believe it, and hope, therefore, they will join in trying to remove it. These things are the evil fruits of sectarian ascendancy. They can only be removed, and that of course gradually, by religious freedom and equality.



NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

The Vision of God, and other Sermons preached on Special Occasions. By HENRY ALLON, DD. London: Hodder and Stoughton. (Price 7s. 6d.)

DURING the last thirty or forty years a very conspicuous change—for good or for evil, or for both—has taken place in the kind of preaching common among Congregationalists. The representatives of the preaching of the generation which has passed away were—Raffles, James, Leifchild, and James Parsons. They differed, no doubt, in many important respects from each other, but they had many common characteristics. Their sermons had a flowing rhetoric, and were penetrated with a passion, which have almost disappeared. Sometimes these famous preachers used their "paper" in the pulpit, but their sermons were not written to be read, but to be spoken. Instruction was subordinate to exhortation; there was a greater concern to stir the emotions than to interest and inform the understanding; in the "application," as it was called, the preachers put out all

their strength; there was vehement entreaty, pathetic appeal, solemn warning, sometimes stern denunciation. The style took its form from the substance of the discourse. The sentences were often long and sweeping. There was an impetuous rush of words. At other times there were short, startling questions, which followed each other in rapid succession like rifle shots. Some of the great preachers laid on "colour" with a heavy brush; they tried to reach the heart through the imagination. To leave men unexcited was to fail.

All this has gone. The matter of our preaching has changed. The form of it has changed. It would take a long time to explain the causes which have led to the abandonment of the old style, and the creation of the new. No doubt the best public speaking of all kinds in this country is very different from what it was at the close of the last century. The stately and elaborate rhetoric to which both Houses of Parliament once listened with admiration would hardly be listened

to with patience in our own times. The glittering "points" of a past generation of Parliamentary orators have also gone out of fashion, and would hardly be tolerated. The faults of Sheridan and of Sheil were but the exaggeration of a manner which was once regarded as excellent. The pulpit has only conformed to the changed taste of the times in surrendering very much of the rhetoric which thirty or forty years ago drew great crowds of people wherever the famous men of those days were announced to preach.

But other influences have contributed to the revolution. The men whose style of preaching was formed at the beginning of the century knew that they had to preach to congregations in which there were large numbers of persons who had no intellectual interest in Christian truth—persons of no great intellectual activity—persons who were unfamiliar with the elementary truths of the Evangelical faith. To have discussed religious difficulties with such persons, to have illustrated the philosophy of the Gospel and of the spiritual life, would have been to waste time. Further, the preachers had the conviction that it was their chief function to force home on the minds and consciences and hearts of their hearers "the first principles of the Gospel of Christ." Their ideal of their work was as different from the ideal of many of the best preachers of the generation that succeeded them, as the ideal that Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright must have had of the work they had to do in propagating the doctrines of Free-Trade, from the ideal formed of his work by a University professor who has to lecture on Political Economy to advanced students. In those early days the Evangelical Faith in its simplest form was still a novelty. Its representatives were "agitators"—not "professors." Their work was aggressive. This determined their manner.

If the men whom we have named—Leifchild, Parsons, James, Raffles, are the best representatives of the type of the preaching which prevailed among us during the earlier part of the century, Dr. Allon is one of the men who must be

named as the best representatives of the type of preaching which Congregational ministers have tried to give their people during the last twenty or thirty years. When a future student of our history wishes to learn the sort of sermons many of us in these days wanted to preach, he should turn to this volume—"The Vision of God." Of course we do not mean that there are many congregations that listen to such sermons as Dr. Allon's. Nor were there many congregations fifty years ago that listened to such sermons as were preached by Dr. Leifchild or James Parsons. But Dr. Leifchild and James Parsons did supremely well what most of our predecessors did moderately well. Dr. Allon does supremely well the kind of thing which many of us have been trying to do.

His sermons are the result of very honest and strenuous thinking. He is resolved to make sure of interesting the intellect, just as our fathers were resolved to make sure of stirring the emotions. There is a certain strenuousness of thought—a sustained vigour—a persistency of intellectual activity in these discourses which is very remarkable. They give one the impression of having been written by a man whose brain is never weary. There is nothing of the affectation, however, of being an "intellectual" preacher. Dr. Allon's nature is far too manly and far too modest for such an affectation to be possible to him.

Nor does the intellectual energy of the sermon suppress religious sentiment and human feeling. But here again Dr. Allon's manliness comes in. He has the reserve which distinguishes Englishmen. He does not get up into the pulpit to let people see how deeply he can feel. He does not nurse and fondle and "cultivate" his pathos. It comes in without any parade of preparation. It is the pathos of a robust nature, not of an effeminate one. He seems almost afraid to let the fire which is in him burst into flame; but it warms the whole substance of his thought.

The difference between the old preaching and the new affects the whole structure of a sermon; perhaps it appears most strikingly at the close. How unlike are the

last few pages of almost any of Dr. Allon's sermons to the last few pages of almost any of the sermons of James Parsons or Mr. James! We have heard that Dr. Leifchild once said that he did not much mind what he said during the first half-hour that he preached; what he was anxious about was the last fifteen minutes. Although, as we have said, Dr. Allon's sermons give one the impression that his brain is never weary, he often seems to dismiss the close of a sermon in haste; lines of thought are simply indicated, instead of being worked out. The "application" is given in outlines which are not filled up.

To Congregationalists in every part of the Kingdom this volume will be very welcome; for Dr. Allon has been lavishly generous in the services which he has rendered to our Churches; again and again he has preached in all the great towns in the country and in multitudes of the smaller towns and villages, and wherever he has preached he is respected and loved.

To those who are not Congregationalists and who may not have heard Congregational preaching, this volume may be given as an example of the best kind of preaching that we have among us.

Those Boys. By AUNT PENN. London: J. F. Shaw and Co. (Price 1s. 6d.)

THIS book hardly corresponds to its title. We expected a tale of school life, but when we opened the volume, we found a story about two little Irish boys, Mike and his brother Ted. Mike, unhappily, committed one act of disobedience, and one sin, as must always happen unless the fault be confessed and forgiven, led to another. Mike goes further and further astray, and even quarrels with Ted, who refuses to shield his brother with a lie. In the course of the story, Mike finds out that his parents are keeping some secret from his brother and himself, and is eager to discover it. The fact was, that a little cousin of the boys, who was just recovering from fever, was living in one part of the house, and to prevent danger the boys were bidden to keep away from those rooms and from the garden. Mike is disobedient once more; but this time

he has to pay dearly for his sin. The infection lays hold, not on him, but on his brother, and for days Ted's life is despaired of. When matters are at their worst, they begin to mend. Mike's foolish and wicked conduct is confessed and forgiven. Ted gets better, and the two brothers "kiss again with tears." The story is simple and pleasant, and will be a favourite with little children. By the way, in a book of this kind a reference to the alleged evil results of Disestablishment in Ireland is decidedly out of place.

Imogen: A Story of St. Augustine. By EMILY SARAH HOLT. London: John F. Shaw & Co. (Price 5s.)

THIS is an historical novel of a commonplace type, and, as regards the plot and literary garb of the story, calls for only a passing notice. But the writer has gone out of her way to build a house of cards upon a strange historical misconception. Her object is to illustrate the generally-acknowledged fact that the British Church existed long before the mission of Augustine: and she endeavours to strengthen her case by adducing what she appears to consider an ecclesiastical tradition, to the effect that the Gospel came to Britain, not through Rome, but straight from the Holy Land, being preached first in this island—according to the "unhesitating" affirmation of the British Church by the Apostle John! For her authority she refers to the words of Archbishop Colman, at the Whitby Conference—a Conference held A.D. 664, to debate the conflicting claims of the British and Roman dates of celebrating Easter. If she will read once more Bede's account—from which she professes to have drawn her materials—she will discover that Archbishop Colman gives her no ground whatever for her assertion. He merely says: "The Easter which I use to keep I received from my Elders, who sent me as a Bishop hither; all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have celebrated it after the same manner; and that the same may not seem to anyone contemptible or worthy to be rejected, it is the same which the blessed John the Evangelist, the disciple especially beloved of our Lord, with all the Churches over which he presided, is

recorded to have observed." He speaks, of course, of the Churches in proconsular Asia, whose *Jewish passover* of the fourteenth Nisan was in the second century erroneously supposed to have been intended as the anniversary of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Is it not difficult then to gauge the value of the following paragraph from "Imogen": "There are some years of this Apostle's [St. John's] life historically unaccounted for, which he is supposed to have spent in retirement—first, at Jerusalem, and afterwards at Ephesus; and it is, to say the least, not improbable that, when so many of his Apostolic brethren were engaged in itinerant preaching, he should have made one missionary journey. Neither, in the Whitby Conference, when the tradition was urged by Archbishop Colman, as a bar to conformity, did the Roman emissaries attempt to discredit it; the tone of their speeches shows rather that they regarded it as an accepted fact, disputed by neither party." The language in which the conversations are given is a curious mixture of "ancient and modern," the "ancient" being chiefly represented by "thee" and "thou."

Conquering and to Conquer. By the Author of *Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family*. London: Daldy, Isbister & Co.

WE cannot congratulate this author upon her success in the region of early Christian story. She treads ground where her strength is hampered: at any rate, we look in vain for her peculiar quaintness and force in this tale of "Rome in the days of St. Jerome." The style of the "Abbess Laeta," as she tells her story, is strained, and preachy, and at times rhapsodical. The book may give a fairly accurate picture of the effiteness of the Roman society, both Christian and Pagan, of that period; but we are not struck by its vividness, and we fail to feel drawn towards the asceticism in which Jerome strove to find salt for the Roman state, or towards Paula, who worshipped Jerome. In this apathy we are plainly a little out of harmony with the writer. The pagan-father—afterwards converted in rather a ready-made way—is the character with which we confess to have the greatest sympathy. May we be permitted to urge upon our author not to forsake the track of more modern life and manners.

[The Editor of the *Literary Churchman* requests us to announce that a "detailed rejoinder" to the "charges" in Dr. Mellor's paper, published in the November number of the CONGREGATIONALIST, appeared in the *Literary Churchman* for December 2.—EDITOR OF CONGREGATIONALIST.]

AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE.—We have received a note from a Sunday-school teacher in a town on the borders of Wales. The first paragraph of the note we commend to the attention of our readers: "On reading the 'Editor's Address' as to extending the circulation of the CONGREGATIONALIST, I thought I would bring the matter before my Sunday-school class and a few others. I am pleased that I got *twelve new subscribers* for next year, and our congregation is not a large one." Our friend suggests that if we sent circulars to Sunday-school superintendents, asking them to promote the circulation of the Magazine, we should have a cordial response. His letter reached us too late for us to be able to act on his advice this year; but as many superintendents are among our present subscribers, we ask them to consider whether they cannot follow our friend's excellent example.—ED.

The Congregationalist.

FEBRUARY, 1877.

DR. PARKER ON THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.*

TO form a just estimate of a book like this, it is necessary, first of all, to understand the author's immediate purpose, and the class of persons for whom he has written. In the first sentences of his Preface, Dr. Parker tells us that—

"The work is correctly described as a re-statement of vital truth. Throughout its pages I have supposed myself to be addressing an earnest but somewhat sceptical inquirer, with the object of commending to him the work of Jesus Christ as argumentatively satisfactory and spiritually indispensable."

It is hardly less necessary to understand the spirit and temper with which the author approaches the general class of subjects to which the special topic discussed in his book belongs. The following paragraphs with which the Preface closes is on this account of great importance :—

"It is hardly to be wondered at that the higher stratum of intelligence has to so large an extent withdrawn itself from sectarian Christianity. It must be difficult for thoughtful men to reconcile themselves to the acceptance of artificialism as necessary to true worship, and equally difficult for them to find their way through all the intricate mechanism of strictly human dogmas to the feet of the Holy and Eternal Christ. In this expression of opinion I refer to artificialism as the excess and perversion of Order, and to dogma as the undue limitation and literalisation of Truth. Order and Dogma we must have ; but the moment they leave the point of absolute simplicity they mischievously interpose between the soul and Christ. Whoever honours Christ is, in my opinion, in the kingdom of heaven, or not far from its citizenship ; he may not, indeed, honour Christ in my form of words, or even with my degree

* "The Priesthood of Christ : A Re-statement of Vital Truth." By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. London : R. D. Dickinson. (Price 6s. in post 8vo. edition.)

of ardour, but if He see in Him a beauty unique, a holiness unrivalled, a self-sacrifice sublime, he is assuredly to be numbered amongst the hosts of the Lord. Animated by this spirit, it will be a great gratification to me to find a general concurrence of critical opinion as to the broad and hopeful temper of this book, and the more so that I see, as life unfolds itself, that human dogmatism upon infinite questions is the most corrupt and malignant blasphemy; and that the interpretation, so far as is possible, of any of those questions, is likely to be correct in the proportion of its self-suppression and charity." (Page vii.)

From these two passages it will be at once apparent that it is no part of Dr. Parker's intention to elaborate a doctrine of the Priesthood of Christ for the benefit of theologians. He has to deal with the whole subject in a broad and general way. Many questions, therefore, which theologians are accustomed to discuss in relation to the Priesthood of Christ are untouched. To have touched them would have been a departure from the purpose of the book.

It may be inferred from the second of the passages I have quoted, that Dr. Parker is not disposed to insist very earnestly on the kind of elaboration which characterises great theological systems. He would probably say, and say with considerable justice, that the extent to which theologians have carried their logical deductions, and the exactness with which they have endeavoured to include the mysteries of heaven, earth, and hell in their definitions, have added neither to the use nor to the beauty, neither to the nobleness nor to the stability, of their creeds.

Anyhow, he prefers to leave the organisation in detail of every man's theological thought to be determined by every man's intellectual and moral idiosyncracies, and he will not acknowledge that there is any authoritative style of theological architecture. What he is anxious about is the foundation. So that men build upon the Rock he is content: he may prefer one style of house for himself; but another man may, for excellent reasons, prefer another. Let a man build in the style of a Rhine castle, or of a Florentine palace; let him have Corinthian columns and capitals, or the clustered shafts and the majestic arches of the Gothic architects—no matter. It is enough that we are all building on Christ.

The desire to assert and illustrate the consistency of wide departures from the common theological creed of Christendom with loyalty to Christ Himself, may perhaps have led Dr. Parker to write the chapter on the "Ultimate Aspects of Christ's Priesthood"—a chapter which, so far as I am able to see, might have been omitted without impairing the discussion of the principal subject of the book. It is dangerous, perhaps, to speculate about the reasons which have induced a living

author to insert in his book a particular chapter which seems unnecessary to his main argument. When an author is dead, a reviewer may safely display his critical acuteness in speculations of this kind ; when an author is still living and within reach of printers and a post-office, such speculations are not likely to bring a reviewer any credit. The reviewer is almost sure to be wrong, and he can be declared wrong by an authority from which there is no appeal. But I can imagine Dr. Parker saying to himself : " It is one part of my intention in this book to break down the sectarianism of theological thought. People suppose that a man can have no real faith in Christ unless he accepts every clause in their complicated creed. If a man accepts thirty of their ' articles,' they condemn him to eternal destruction for rejecting the remaining nine. This is horrible and blasphemous intolerance. It is not enough for me to protest against it and to argue against it : I will discuss the doctrine that both for saints and sinners death is probably the final extinction of personal consciousness ; that Shakespeare lives in his works and only in his works ; that the child we have lost lives in our purified love and our attempts at unselfishness, and lives nowhere else : that the crown of righteousness of which St. Paul speaks is the spiritual influence which he has been exerting in Christendom for the last eighteen hundred years—' compared with St. Paul's spiritual influence, any crown that he can be wearing in another state of being is worthless.' A man holding such opinions would be regarded by most Christian people with dismay. Some good men think it terrible for any Christian minister to maintain that at last, after bearing many stripes, the impenitent will suffer eternal destruction instead of eternal torment. They will think it more terrible still for a Christian minister to entertain the possibility of the final extinction of consciousness at death, in the case both of the saved and the unsaved. But I will show that there are very good grounds for this speculation. I will do this in the very book in which I illustrate afresh the divine glory of Christ, and in which I put out my strength in the assertion and defence of His Atonement for human sin. In this way I will give a practical illustration of what I mean when I say that the Church is wider than the creeds, and that a man may reject a substantial element of the common faith of Christendom, and yet be loyal to Christ."*

* Of course, my guess turns out to be wrong ; and yet, on second thoughts, I am not sure that it is wrong. In a letter to the *English Independent* (Jan. 11th, 1877) Dr. Parker says bluntly : " To deny personal immortality is to deny Christ." This does not look as if he meant that the man who maintains the theory described in the text is to be treated as holding the substance of the Christian creed ; but what follows in the letter gives some encouragement to the hope that perhaps, after all, my guess, if it did not quite hit the mark, travelled in the right direction :—

It is dangerous, as I have said, to speculate about a living author's intentions, and it is very likely that my speculation is a blunder; but only for some such reason as that which I have suggested can I suppose that Chap. XVI. on the "Ultimate Aspects of Christ's Priesthood" was inserted in this volume.

The early chapters of the book are likely to be of great use; but I have some doubt whether they will be specially serviceable to the kind of man commonly described as a "somewhat sceptical inquirer." The difficulties in relation to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which are discussed with the greatest energy and success, are those with which of late years many men have had to struggle who were trained in Evangelical Churches, and who by the strength of their religious faith have been held fast to Christ, notwithstanding grave theological perplexities. But if Dr. Parker has not done much for "sceptical inquirers," he has done very much for some of his own ministerial brethren, and for many of the members of their Churches, to whom the traditional explanations of the great mystery of the Death of Christ have become incredible.

The first sentence of his introductory chapter is admirable. The ultimate question at issue is stated in a couple of lines with that enviable simplicity which seems always within Dr. Parker's reach, though he too frequently appears to be indifferent to it: "What did Jesus Christ do for men that men could not have done for themselves?" The question assumes, as Dr. Parker points out, that Christ was something more than man, and this assumption suggests a striking passage on the superhuman dignity of our Lord. Dr. Parker is never so strong as when he is discussing this great subject:

"Christ, indeed, is the Supreme Mystery, account for His personality and ministry as we may; a mystery if He came down from Godhead,

"To deny personal immortality is to deny Christ; because He lives, we shall live also; but if there be any man otherwise minded, who is prepared, with intelligence and veneration, to give a new definition of terms, I insist that he heard, and answered, and respected. So long as I have a place in the Congregational ministry, however humble and unimportant that place may be, I will give the most distinct and liberal encouragement to every brother who has a doctrine, a psalm, or even a tongue, which he wishes to subject to candid and reverent criticism. I wish the Congregational ministry to be more doctrinal and, if you please, more dogmatic than ever; but doctrine and dogma are secure and useful only as they are held with ever-enlarging intelligence, and with the ever-deepening conviction that our highest attainments fall infinitely short of the fulness of God. The controversies which are raging around us will never shake the glorious Gospel of God the Son, but they may help to purify and enlarge all definitions that are merely human in their origin."

but an infinitely greater mystery if, being only and merely a man, He so far escaped, or even appeared to escape, the limits of manhood as to give multitudes of sedate and highly-cultivated people the impression that He was making Himself equal with God. Why this, I pray you to remember, was the very thing which led to the sin of man; he was told that if he took of the fruit of the tree that was in the midst of the garden he would be '*as gods*'! The second Adam is apparently going to repeat the fatal mistake. He is about to be as God! And He was guilty of the first Adam's sin, with aggravations which made it unpardonable, if He did not, in terms which could not admit of two meanings, utterly repudiate and denounce every claim to be more than only and merely a man. He was more bound to do this than was any other person, because He had undoubtedly given occasion for the suspicion that He did claim to be more than human. He ought, as an act of religious duty, to have begun every day's work with the distinct denial of superhuman claims; a herald should have gone before Him to call for silence that He might the more impressively have told the people that, with the warnful experience of the first Adam before Him, who wished to escape the limits of his own genius and be as a god, He Himself was a man only, one of the common people, having beginning of days and end of life, and that to think of Him as other than man was to blaspheme against God. Whether He did thus release Himself from the openly-avowed suspicion of alleging superhuman claims, let any reader of His life declare. It is not enough to show that here and there He was weary, hungry, and faint, like other men; nor that He called Himself the Son of Man; there is no difficulty upon that side of the question, nor is there the slightest doubt of His humanity; what He was bound to do, if only and merely a man, was to dissolve and for ever dissipate all mystery upon the other side of the question, so that we could, so to speak, see all around Him, and be able to declare that there was not so much as a threadlet more in His relationships to God than in our own. Now, *nowhere* does Jesus Christ put Himself on a level with other men. Nowhere does he say, 'I am as weak and as ignorant as you are, we must therefore help one another.' Nowhere does He say that His miracles were like other miracles not wrought by Himself; on the contrary, look at His wonderful deeds. He says they are WORKS WHICH NONE OTHER MAN DID; Moses said that he stammered; Jeremiah said that he was a child; John the Baptist said that he was only a voice; but not one word of self-depreciation did Christ utter; He said He was greater than Solomon, greater than Jonah, greater than all that had ever gone before Him, and that He would judge the world!" (Pages 7, 8.)

The whole of the second chapter, which is on the Necessity of Mediation, is very vigorous, although I think that too much emphasis is placed upon the fact that in the story of the Fall there is no hint that the idea of repentance originated with Adam. The question discussed in the chapter is well put in the following sentences.—

"Let us allow that it seems strange that any difference which may have arisen between man and God (as in Eden) could not have been arranged by the parties implicated in the offence quietly and successfully. If any misunderstanding should arise between you and me, we can explain, apologise, and

forgive ; there is no need for a tragedy or a sensation, and above all things, neither of us needs die to put the other into a right temper. Why should any third party come between us ? I am quite prepared to say to God, 'Yes, I have done wrong ; I often do wrong. I am sorry ; I repent ; pardon me ;' What more can God ask for ?" (Page 19.)

Dr. Parker replies :—

"In the first place, there may be an error in the supposition that man is so nearly upon an *equality* with God that he has merely to apologise in order to bring the misunderstanding to a friendly close ; in the second place, there may be an error in the supposition that the question of offence lies between two *persons*, the sinner being one and God the other ; in the third place, there may be an error in the supposition that the sinner has only *done* wrong, whereas the fact may be that he really *is* wrong—the question not being one of occasional offence, but of lost innocence and perverted nature.

"It is most important that we fully understand the second of these suggestions—namely, that the offence may not lie between two persons, the sinner being one and God the other. We are properly accustomed to think of God as a Person, and yet there is extreme danger attending the use of that common word in thinking of God. You think of God as a Person because you wish to separate Him from what you call the universe ; you cannot, you truly say, love the universe, you can only love a living and loving person. The danger is, that in thinking of a person you fix the mind upon something that has limits, and therefore upon something that has rights outside of itself,—not upon something unlimited, and that includes all rights, and is itself the very fountain of right. You will not misunderstand me if I say, that there is something greater than any personality conceivable by the human mind, even though that personality bear the name of God. As applied to God, the term Person is a mere convenience, originated for the help of minds that cannot grasp Infinity. I accept it as a temporary term ; as a glass through which I see darkly ; a symbol which stands to me for more than itself, as the wine stands for blood. It is indeed a reality, and the more real because it is so different from what it seems to be. As I now see the Personality of God, it is a star far off and dim, but in reality it is the focal point in which all glories converge and burn.

"What, then, is greater than personality as we know it, or as it will probably ever be knowable by us ? That which is greater than such personality is *Right* or *Righteousness*. Of course God being what He is—which is, so to speak, an accident rather than a necessity of personality, certainly not a necessity, or it would inhere in all personality—He *is* Right, but He is this not because He is a Person, but because He is infinitely *more* than we can ever think of in that relation. But by enlarging our idea of personality, or looking beyond it towards that which is signified by the term, we change the form of the question and throw it into this shape : Why cannot Right, or Righteousness, make it up with the bad man and say no more about his sin ? You will see at once not only the absurdity but the wickedness of the suggestion. Why cannot Righteousness impair its own authority ? Why cannot Righteousness be less than righteousness ?" (Pages, 20—22.)

In this passage Dr. Parker touches the root of the difficulty which men feel about the necessity of an atonement for sin. So long as God is

thought of as standing on the same moral plane as ourselves—stronger, wiser, better than we are, but without that Moral Authority which is His unique glory—the necessity of Mediation will never be recognised. The recognition of His Moral Authority is an essential element in a true conception of God ; it is this which chiefly distinguishes worship from the affection and reverence with which we regard good men. As I have said elsewhere—

“Wonder, however profound, and love, however fervent, never become worship until they are blended with another element—with a homage to the authority—not merely to the perfections of God—corresponding to the homage which conscience offers to the authority of the moral law. The supremacy of the law is absolute and irreversible. But when God is truly known, conscience, without revoking or qualifying the acknowledgment of this supremacy, confesses that the authority which it had recognised in an ideal law is the awful and glorious prerogative of a living Person.”*

The third chapter, “The Whole greater than the Part”—is an illustration and application of the principle that “no one man being all men, it follows that no one man has the *whole* idea of justice, of mercy, of righteousness or love ;” and closes with the following summary of the introductory argument contained in the earlier part of the treatise:—

“(1) That human nature is too vast, intricate, and profound to be known in its totality by any one man ; (2) That human sin is too subtle, penetrating, and far-reaching in its effects to be known by any one sinner ; (3) That any scheme that can cover the whole case and meet the complete necessity must be the work of a Mind that comprehends human nature and human sin in their uttermost boundaries and consequences ; (4) That any revelation purporting to come from such a Mind has a *primâ facie* claim to attention ; and (5) That its very claim to such attention should beget in the student a spirit of watchful and dignified docility.” (Pages 43, 44.)

Then follows “A Study of the Personality of the Priest,” in which it is urged that the whole scope and spirit and aim of our Lord’s work, His general claims, and His manner of teaching, must be taken into account in the interpretation of His particular sayings.

The fifth chapter, on the “One Moment of Absolute *Loneliness* in the Life of Christ,” is far from satisfactory. Dr. Parker attaches great importance to the fact that at our Lord’s trial not one man stood up for Him, and that immediately after His disciples had declared that they were ready to die with Him, “they all forsook Him and fled.” The common explanation of this desertion, as arising from a failure of courage on the part of the disciples, Dr. Parker rejects. The desertion seems to him something more than “an intermission of constancy in the ordinary sense of terms.” He regards the desertion as a solemn mystery.

* “The Atonement” (Congregational Lecture for 1875), page 327.

But was not the appeal of our Lord to the Scriptures ("that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled") likely to have a very startling and paralysing effect on the disciples at the exciting and alarming moment of our Lord's arrest? If our Lord was surrendering Himself to His enemies in fulfilment of a Divine thought and purpose, if the tone and manner in which He appealed to the prophets forced the conviction home upon the hearts of the disciples that it was His irrevocable intention to yield to the malice and power of the priests, and that His own intention was but the accomplishment of ancient prophecy, they might well be confounded, and might naturally enough retreat under the shadow of the olive-trees of Gethsemane, and leave their Master alone. That they did not all desert Him altogether is plain—"There followed Him a certain young man having a linen cloth cast about his naked body," and this young man was so near to the soldiers who were leading Christ off, that they "laid hold of him, and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked." Peter and John followed Christ, though "afar off." The moment of absolute loneliness was but a moment, "a point," as Dr. Parker says, "hardly measurable by time;" and I confess myself unable to see why this point was "the critical point," a point of "the profoundest moral significance." Dr. Parker says: "If even one man had remained by His side throughout the whole process, the universality of Jesus Christ's work would have been impaired. It was necessary that human nature, as such, apart from nationality or any other accident, should show itself; Jesus Christ must stand alone, not the victim of Jewish spite or a maladministration of the law (both points being involved in the principle that the greater includes the less), but as 'separate from sinners,' as having something in Him which fallen human nature, even under its best conditions, was morally unable to understand."* But what Dr. Parker does not make clear is why our Lord should have been left in this loneliness precisely at the moment of His arrest. He may say that this was the moment when by His own consent He came into the hands of the men who were to put Him to death; but there were other moments which seem more critical—the time of His agony, for instance, when the elect disciples slept; and the appalling moment when He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Throughout the chapter Dr. Parker seems to be feeling for an idea, which he sometimes touches but never firmly grasps.

The chapter on "Gethsemane and Calvary," and the chapters in which the testimony of the Epistles is discussed, are extremely interesting, and contain very much excellent thinking. Chapter X., on "Conflicting Theories," is not so able. More than once Dr. Parker

* Page 72.

misses the meaning of the arguments and statements which he is criticising. For instance, Mr. Edward White, in his "Life in Christ," has the following passage, in which, as it seems to me, he states with great precision the fundamental difference between the "Moral" and the "Expiatory" theories of the Atonement:—

"There are influential schools of thought, professedly Christian, and even Protestant, which zealously denounce the notion of an expiation of past sins by Christ's sacrifice, affirming that there is no direct connection between His death and the forgiveness of sinners. . . . Christ is our Saviour in this sense alone, that He leads us to repentance and a new life, and therefore delivers us by *such change of character* from the punishment due to past offences. The blood-sacrifice of Christ was the life-sacrifice; and He gave Himself for our sins both by life and death in this sense, that He might 'deliver us from this present evil world' by teaching us to do the will of God our Father. The man who repents becomes thereby righteous, and God gives him eternal life accordingly; reckoning righteousness to the man who becomes righteous in the root-principle of his being.

"With this one-sided teaching, accommodation is, I believe, impossible, so long as the apostolic writings are held as authority. The answer to be given to these statements rests altogether on interpretation. There is for us no hope of comprehending Christ's religion except as explained by the New Testament writers. If Christ and His Apostles did not understand or clearly express the Divine message, no one else can hope to understand it. We hold, then, that such an idea of Atonement as has just been described, not only fails to fill up the Apostle's language, but offers to it the utmost violence. The Apostles teach, as plainly as words can teach anything, that the Death of Christ was an Atonement by *expiation*, or *sin offering*, for *SINS THAT ARE PAST* (Rom. iii.), not simply a provision for preventing future transgressions." (Pages 267, 268.)

Dr. Parker replies:—

"Considerable stress is laid upon the words (Rom. iii.) 'sins that are past;' they are printed in italics and in small capitals to mark their emphasis. But what is the precise bearing of that expression in this argument? Is it not true that *all* sins are past? Is it not true that forgiveness is necessarily and purely *retrospective*? How could it possibly be otherwise? We are told that Christ's Atonement 'was not simply a provision for preventing *future* transgression,' a suggestion which must surely have been intended to meet a *future* objection, for I am not aware that such a doctrine has yet been propounded. And yet this wondrous ministry of Christ would seem, whilst stretching its redeeming service over all sins past, to have actually some reference to sins yet uncommitted! If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'"* (Page 130.)

Mr. White appeals to St. Paul to show that the Apostle did not believe that Christ's Atonement was "simply a provision for preventing

* 1 John ii. 1, 2.

future transgressions ;" and Dr. Parker says that he is not aware that such a doctrine has yet been propounded. But this doctrine is the very heart of the "Moral" theory. It denies that the Death of Christ is the ground on which God forgives sin, and affirms that it is simply God's great method of preventing men from sinning. That this could not have been St. Paul's theory Mr. White shows by quoting Rom. iii. 25—"God hath openly set forth Christ, for Himself, as a propitiatory sacrifice . . . in His blood, for the sake of manifesting His righteousness on account of the pretermission [*or* overlooking] in the forbearance of God of sins which had passed." In the ages which preceded the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, God had borne with the sins of men—had passed them over ; His righteousness had not been fully revealed. The Death of Christ was something more than 'a great appeal to the human heart, intended to produce repentance, and to prevent sin in the future ; it had a relation to sins which had been committed ages before. Dr. Parker cannot make out the precise bearing on the argument of the expression which Mr. White has emphasised. Its "bearing" is surely simple enough. On the "Moral" theory the Death of Christ could have no relation to the sins which were committed by the generations which had passed away before Christ died.

Chap. X.—"Conflicting Theories of Types and Shadows"—is vigorous and firm. Chap. XI.—"Difficulties of both Theories"—falls far below the level of Dr. Parker's best writing. It starts with a misapprehension of the real position of the controversy. "If I can have only one of those theories to the total exclusion of the other, my embarrassment will be very great ;"—this is the point of departure. But the "Expiatory" theory does not exclude the positive elements of the "Moral" theory. While affirming that Christ died as a Propitiation for the sins of the world, and that there is a direct relation between His Death and the forgiveness of sin, it also affirms that the Death of Christ is the supreme appeal of the love of God to the human heart. The "Expiatory" theory declares that the Death of Christ is the ground on which God forgives sin, *as well* as a Divine revelation intended to induce men to love God and to keep His commandments. It covers the whole ground covered by the "Moral" theory, *in addition* to the ground which the "Moral" theory excludes. In this, as in many other instances, the truly "Broad" theology is the Evangelical theory ; and the "narrow" theology is that which rejects the Evangelical faith.

The discussion of the two theories also seems to me infelicitous ; the "Expiatory" theory is sometimes stated in its most offensive and least tenable form. Dr. Parker does inadequate justice to the doctrine which he is anxious to maintain.

Chap. XII.—“The Point of Rest”—is intended to establish the position that “all these theories and views of the work of Christ may be literally true to the consciousness and the spiritual necessities of the men who uphold them, without being dogmatically binding upon the men who oppose them, and that whether they are literally true, or are merely the most convenient expression of the mind’s supreme necessities at a given time, they do not touch the one great truth that precedes, overrules, and outlasts all human theorising and speculation.” I may be very dull, but what this means I cannot make out. Dr. Parker can write with admirable clearness. But if I may judge by my own experience, his long sentences are very perilous to navigate. The channel looks plain enough at first sight, but there are hidden sand-banks on which unfortunate sailors are almost sure to run aground. I thought I knew what this sentence meant when I first read it. On reading it a second time I was perplexed. On reading it a third time I discovered that I did not understand it at all. With the drift of the chapter as a whole I think I perfectly agree, but there are so many cross currents that, at times, the drift seems doubtful. For me, what Dr. Parker describes as “the Point of Rest” is this: It is the Death of Christ—not any doctrine about the Death of Christ—that atones for human sin, and constitutes the objective ground on which God forgives sin; and, further, while a man may be intellectually wrong about the doctrine, the Death itself may command that trust which is the essence of what theologians have called saving faith. I think that this is also what Dr. Parker means; but there are passages in the chapter which seem, at least, to indicate that conflicting doctrines may in some sense be equally true. The chapter confounds two very different things—the truth which particular men can appropriate, and the truth which there is to be appropriated.

About the next three chapters there is not very much to be said; but about Chap. XVI., which professes to illustrate “the Ultimate Aspects of Christ’s Priesthood,” one might write a volume. I have said that this chapter “*professes to illustrate*” the Ultimate Aspects of Christ’s Priesthood; it is really a discussion of a theory affirming the final extinction, in the case of all men, of personal existence at the moment of death. If the position contended for by the controversialist introduced in this chapter can be maintained, there is no personal existence for either saint or sinner beyond the grave.

The defence of this doctrine, it should be remembered, is not made by Dr. Parker in his own name. After stating the conception of Resurrection and Immortality held (1) by those who believe that the very flesh will rise again, and (2) by those who believe, not in the resurrection of the *body*, but in the resurrection of the dead, another theory is presented:

"A third man boldly denies personal resurrection : he says that the resurrection of the body is a figure or parable of a great spiritual fact. He says that men rise again in each other, and are immortal in each other ; the parent rises in the child, and the older in the younger ; that the teacher rises again and becomes immortal in all who believe his doctrine ; that in this sense Milton lives, and Bunyan, the whole army of martyrs and the goodly fellowship of the apostles ; he denies the immortality of the individual, and affirms the immortality of the race,—he says *men* die, but *man* lives for ever. If we say that this is harsh, he asks if it is harsh for the spring to grow into the summer, and demands whether the spring is dead if it has added its contribution to the strength and beauty of the tree ? If we ask what is meant by those passages of Scripture in which the blessedness of the holy dead is described, he answers that they speak of the Ultimate Humanity, redeemed and glorified, and prepared for the prepared place." (Pages 227, 228.)

Dr. Parker says, justly enough, that "a man who comes before us with a theory so bold and startling, may well be plied with searching questions," and several pages are occupied with an imaginary discussion, in which the argument for a life of personal blessedness in the case of those who are in Christ is very feebly handled. The antagonistic doctrine, with some of its supposed advantages, is then re-stated by the "third man," who is charged with the responsibility of maintaining it :

"It is true that by this theory I seem to depopulate heaven, but I cannot forget that the same theory saves countless millions of my fellow-creatures from fire and brimstone, the intolerable anguish and burning torture of an eternal hell. It would gratify me to know that immediately upon death I shall enter into a land of cloudless and perpetual summer, where sin will vex me no more, and my heart ache no longer, where all dear friends will meet me, where every tender reminiscence will be recalled, where new and high and abiding relations will be formed ; but in the height of my anticipations I ask myself the question, Can you sacrifice all these personal prospects if such be the will of God, and become but as a moment in the spring-time which ushers in the summer of universal humanity ? Can you slay the dear Isaac of hope ? Do you say, Father, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but Thine be done ? Rely upon it, my heart is tried to the uttermost by this theory : it often grieves and troubles me ; it crucifies my self-love ; it abashes the ambition which says it will take of the tree of life and eat and live for ever ; and therefore when I adopt it, as a high probability rather than a positive and unchangeable dogma, it chastens my self-laudation, it enlarges my sense of responsibility, it quickens me to work every hour of my short day, and it widens my self-preparation for heaven into a living and glad sacrifice for the progress and salvation of the race. Only Christ could have made such a sacrifice possible to me." (Page 234.)

How this is to be reconciled with the following paragraph, I do not profess to understand :—

" ' Do you mean to say, then, that the individual life has no immortality ? ' I say nothing of the kind. I say something infinitely better, viz. that the

Spirit of Christ in a man should lead him to that last point of *self-sacrifice* which is willing either to live or to die so that humanity be ennobled and sanctified. This is the sublimity of resignation. This, indeed, is *self-sacrifice*—a term often degraded into meaning merely the surrender of a habit or the denial of a taste. Self-sacrifice is infinitely different, infinitely superior." (Page 231.)

Dr. Parker closes the chapter with the following criticism:—

"This theory, by no means destitute of ingenuity and even of some excellent moral qualities, cannot but awaken the strongest opposition, for—

- "(1) There is no support to be found for it in the *letter* of Scripture.
- "(2) There is much in the letter of Scripture which directly *contradicts* it.
- "(3) The human mind is so constituted that it cannot accept such a theory by way of *instruction*; if embraced at all, it must be by silent spiritual expansion and illumination: therefore if the theory were preached boldly and universally, no living soul could probably ever receive it.
- "(4) If it could possibly be received intellectually by a man of low *moral* nature, it would do that man, and all like him, infinite mischief, because that which is now at least partially checked would become unrestrained and unmanageable.

"On the other hand, there is a ground upon which the theory is worthy of respectful notice. If a man honestly say, as has been said in the foregoing argument, that his study of the *method* of the Scriptures, and of the fact that life is *illusory* rather than literal, and especially that his prayerful and long-continued study of the spirit of Christ, has convinced him that the final point of Christian experience is willingness to be nothing, and to work his 'little day' in the spirit of absolute *self-sacrifice*, for the sake of generations yet to come, and that this is a truth which he never learned until he knew *Christ* and was crucified with Him,—if a man can honestly come by this process to this result, nothing less than the supreme miracle has been accomplished in the subduing of instincts, intuitions, and yearnings, which seem to be absolutely inseparable from our very being." (Pages 240, 241)

Some of the Calvinistic theologians of a past generation were accustomed to maintain that until a man is willing to be damned he is hardly in a condition to be saved. Dr. Parker—speaking in his own person—thinks that "nothing less than the supreme miracle has been accomplished" in a saint when, instead of being penetrated with an intense longing for perfect communion with Christ in heaven, he is perfectly content to submit to personal extinction. Nor is it only the *blessedness* of communion with Christ that we are asked to resign. We have been accustomed to rejoice in the hope of personal immortality in heaven, because we have believed that in heaven our reverence for the majesty of Christ will deepen and deepen from age to age, that our love for Him will become intenser and

still intenser, that our obedience to His will will become more and more vigorous, and that His joy in us will become richer and still richer as we rise to loftier and still loftier perfection.

Surely it is a corrupt spiritualism which teaches that a willing surrender of this great hope is the last achievement of the spirit of self-sacrifice. It is not "self" that is sacrificed in this frightful act of asceticism, but something far diviner. "Self" is crucified with Christ in this world; it dies hard; it dies slowly; its crucifixion would be impossible had not Christ hung on the cross for us; but through our union with Him its ultimate death is certain. But where is the cross which renders possible the crucifixion of "the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"? I agree with Dr. Parker—or rather with the imaginary defender of the doctrine which occupies the greater part of this chapter—that self-sacrifice is "a term often degraded into meaning merely the surrender of a habit or the denial of a taste." I agree with him in maintaining that "self-sacrifice is infinitely different, infinitely superior." But to ask us to consent to a "second death," and to tell us that after we have "died unto sin" it is a sign of transcendent perfection to be willing also to "die unto God," is a fantastic and extravagant demand which, if it be pressed, will impair, instead of strengthen, the true spirit of self-sacrifice.

If it be said that as a test of our readiness to submit perfectly to the Divine will, we may do well to ask ourselves whether we should be willing to surrender personal immortality if God asked for the surrender. I reply, that the question ought not to be put. All true holiness is the result of the work of the Spirit of truth in the life and character of those who are one with Christ. If we believe that God intends us to inherit personal immortality, it is profanity to ask Him to make us willing to resign the transcendent gift. The grace which God gives is for the real occasions of life. To forget this is to make the whole of our moral and religious life morbid and unreal. For a man to ask himself deliberately on his wedding morning whether he is so resigned to the will of God that he is perfectly prepared to consent to his bride's immediate death, is preposterous folly. The grace he needs just then is grace to make him heartily grateful to God for the new brightness and joy which have come to him, and grace to enable him to treat his wife with the chivalrous devotion she has a right to claim, and grace, while he loves her with what seems all his heart, to love God still better. If we have honestly accepted the will of God as our supreme law, we shall receive strength from God to do God's will and to submit to it as occasion demands. When God sends us work, He sends us strength to do it; and when He sends us trouble, He sends us strength to bear it. For troubles which we imagine for our-

selves, and for work which we imagine for ourselves, we must go for strength to our imagination—not to Him.

If, therefore, Dr. Parker should say that his object in this chapter is simply to subject the spirit of self-sacrifice to the severest possible test, by stating an imaginary case, I should reply that this method of dealing with the spiritual life is most pernicious.

Nor is there anything distinctively Christian in this "willingness to be nothing," and "to work our 'little day' in the spirit of absolute *self-sacrifice* for the sake of generations yet to come." Mr. Frederick Harrison will tell us that Dr. Parker has been poaching on the preserves of M. Comte; that the virtue which excites Dr. Parker's wonder is the ideal virtue of a religion which knows nothing of Christ as the Redeemer of mankind, and whose only God is Humanity. Forms of thought which are as remote as the poles from Christian faith culminate in what Dr. Parker appears to be willing to recognise as "the final point of Christian experience."

There is another aspect of this chapter which it is impossible to pass over in silence. The defender of the denial of the future blessedness of the righteous is asked, "What would be the effect upon the popular mind of preaching such a doctrine as this?" and he answers—

"I would not preach it to the popular mind. In the pulpit little beyond elementary truths should be proclaimed, because public assemblies are miscellaneous, unclassified, and undisciplined. Such doctrines should be written, or stated to the prepared few, yet they should give tone and colouring to all public expositions and appeals. The preacher having declared a literal gospel, and affirmed all that is severest in legal requirement, should add, 'I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Comforter shall guide you into all truth.' Mark how this is to be the work of the Spirit. It is not written; it is not put into words; it is a mystery disclosed to the heart, a vision shown to the soul." (Page 233.)

Earlier in the chapter this doctrine of "reserve" is stated by the same interlocutor with still greater distinctness:

"It is right to tell the sunken and degraded wretch that he will dwell for ever in the lake of fire and brimstone: no other doctrine could reach him; you must adapt your emphasis to his deafness." (Page 232.)

Dr. Parker ought to have vehemently denounced this double-dealing. He has strong language at command when he cares to use it, and in this case the strongest he could have used would not have been too strong. Surely he should have told us what he thinks about a preacher who believes that at the moment of death both the penitent and the impenitent are to lose for ever all consciousness, but who threatens the impenitent with eternal torment; about a man who believes that

"conscience is hell," and that the fires of this hell will be extinguished when the heart ceases to beat, but who tells men that when this life is over they will be condemned if they remain impenitent, to "the never-dying worm, the everlasting burnings, the lake of fire and brimstone."

What makes the case worse is, that the defender of this doctrine of reserve and accommodation is permitted to shelter it under the example and authority of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Did He tell a lie to the woman of Samaria when He gave her the impression that He had water of which if a man drunk he would never thirst again? Was He mocking men when He told them He would rebuild the temple in three days? Did He not teach the highest doctrine of immortality when He said that Elias reappeared in John the Baptist?" (Page 232.)

With a single touch of the point of his spear Dr. Parker could have shivered this monstrous argument. By leaving it unanswered he produces the uncomfortable impression that he thinks that there is some force in it. By not letting loose the floods of his indignation on it, he will lead some people to suppose that he sees no dishonesty in it.

About the way in which the defender of the doctrine is permitted, without any attempt at correction and confutation, to twist and pervert passages from the New Testament, and to throw a haze of unreality over the most definite statements concerning the personal immortality of believers, it is perhaps unnecessary that I should trouble my readers with any lengthened observations. Many of the interpretations imposed on passages which are quoted are no interpretations at all. Take this for example:—

"Did not Paul say that there was a crown of righteousness laid up for him?" Certainly, and he wears it now. Compared with Paul's spiritual influence, any crown that he can possibly be wearing in another state of being is worthless." (Page 231.)

It is certain that St. Paul did not mean what the interpreter of his words attributes to him. Part of the passage quoted is omitted; it would have been inconvenient to have quoted the whole of it: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me *at that day* [when He "shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom," *verse 1*]: and *not to me only*, but unto all them also that love His appearing." *

Take another example:—

"Do you mean to say that so great a mind as Shakespeare's is extinct?" No. Shakespeare lives in his works. He was never so distinctly alive as to-day. He gave us all he had to give, all that God meant him to give, and

* 2 Timothy iv. 8.

now, in the fire and splendour, the pathos and nobleness, of his works, he is clothed upon with his house from heaven." (Page 228.)

The allusion is to St. Paul's words in 2 Cor. v. 1-3: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked." If *Hamlet*, and *Lear*, and the *Midsummer Night's Dream* are the "house which is from heaven" with which Shakespeare has been clothed upon, I suppose that "the house from heaven" with which St. Paul has been clothed upon consists of the Epistle to the Romans, the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the rest. I wonder what St. Paul would have said to anyone who suggested to him that this might be his meaning?

Does Dr. Parker really think that there is any sense or any reverence in treating apostolic language after this fashion? Does he think it was a sufficient condemnation of this method of interpretation to say at the end of his discussion of this theory that "(1) there is no support to be found for it in the *letter* of Scripture"—(the italics are Dr. Parker's own, and suggests that there is a good deal of support to be found for the theory in the *spirit* of Scripture;) and that "(2) there is much in the letter of Scripture which directly *contradicts* it"—as though it were an open question whether the spirit of Scripture does not confirm it.

A criticism in the *English Independent* on "The Priesthood of Christ," has drawn from Dr. Parker an angry letter, part of which I have already quoted at the foot of page 67. Dr. Parker says:—

"The impression produced upon the minds of your readers must be that I have in some way, direct or indirect, in my own name or by a dramatic colloquy, denied the doctrine of personal immortality. His criticism distinctly amounts to so much, notwithstanding the 'loophole' which he pretends to see. Now, what are the facts? In my book entitled 'The Priesthood of Christ,' I refer to a man who 'boldly denies personal resurrection, who says that the resurrection of the body is a figure or parable of a great spiritual fact.' After allowing him to explain his position, I say, 'A man who comes before us with a theory so bold and startling may well be plied with searching questions.' I then put to the man some sixteen or eighteen inquiries, any one of which seems to me to create an insuperable difficulty, and after he has answered them all, and, in doing so, has still farther developed and expounded his theory, so as to make it much larger than it was at first, I dismiss the theorist, and proceed as follows in my own name:—

Then Dr. Parker gives the paragraphs from "The Priesthood of Christ," beginning, "This theory, though by no means destitute of in-

genuity"; this passage I have quoted on page 77, and need not quote it again.

Although I read the article in the *English Independent* when it appeared, I do not happen to have it at hand. But I am bound to say that "the impression" which Dr. Parker says that the article was likely to produce on the minds of the readers of the *English Independent* is very like the impression which was produced on my own mind by the chapter as it stands in Dr. Parker's own book. When I had finished reading the chapter the first time, it seemed to me so incredible that Dr. Parker should intend to maintain that the doctrine discussed in the chapter is tenable by any man who regards the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ as authoritative, that I felt sure I had not discovered the real intention of the discussion. I looked back to the end of the chapter which precedes it; I looked forward to the "conclusion," which immediately follows; I examined the Preface, and then read the chapter again. The impression remained that Dr. Parker, while not intending to commit himself to the theory as "a positive and unchangeable dogma," really thought that it might claim a "high probability." I was still unsatisfied. Being a dull man I thought that there was some hidden meaning in the chapter which I had not hit upon, and that I was in danger of being "taken in" by some subtle irony, as the High-churchmen were "taken in" by De Foe's "Short Way with Dissenters." I then read the whole book through again, and so read the chapter a third time, and still the irony, if there was any, was not apparent. Dr. Parker opens the discussion in his own name, and illustrates, with his usual force and vividness, the principle which Robertson had illustrated before him, of "the Illusiveness of Life." "Life," he says, "is a series of illusions; it promises one thing and gives another; it is not literal and arithmetical, but ideal and imaginative: Canaan was promised to Abraham, but Abraham never got Canaan; not that the promise was broken, but enlarged and glorified," &c. The illustration of this principle extends over three pages. "Jesus Christ bewildered people, and perhaps more than others His own disciples, by using literal terms for spiritual realities; leaven for doctrine, birth for regeneration of soul, water for the Holy Spirit, and many other instances. He said, 'The Kingdom of God is within you;' instead of a kingdom in their mean sense of the word, He gave His disciples 'power from on high'; for miracles He substituted thoughts, and for Himself He gave the Holy Ghost. . . . Ask yourself this question, and answer it distinctly before going another step: *Is it true that human life is trained upon what may be called the principle of illusions?*" All this is written by Dr. Parker in his own name; it seems to lead up to the position defended by "the third man," who "boldly denies per-

sonal resurrection," and who says that "men rise again in each other, and are immortal in each other."

Apart from the letter to the *English Independent*, in which Dr. Parker declares that "to deny personal immortality is to deny Christ," the "impression" is hardly to be escaped that this chapter was intended to show that the hope of a personal immortality in Christ may be one of those wholesome illusions by which men are trained and disciplined to holy living. This, however, is not what Dr. Parker meant. His letter to the *English Independent* makes this certain. But now another question arises. What connection is there between the title of the chapter and its contents? What are the "Ultimate Aspects of Christ's Priesthood"? What Dr. Parker has written under this heading is what some of his critics have thought was a defence of the tenableness of a theory denying the personal immortality of the saved; we now learn from himself that it was intended to be a confutation of that theory. But the chapter on the "Ultimate Aspects of Christ's Priesthood" remains unwritten.

After a series of notes, in which an account is given of several recent books on the Atonement, and in one of which Dr. Parker speaks with great generosity of the Congregational Union Lecture for 1875, Dr. Parker closes the volume with a short sketch of his own early spiritual experience, which it is impossible to read without keen interest and strong personal sympathy.

R. W. DALE.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

FEB. 4.—"*And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.*"—Matt. iv. 23.

THESE synagogues, in which Jesus taught, were places of religious assembly and worship, somewhat similar to our own chapels. After the Jews returned from the exile in Babylon, a new hunger for the Law of God and the worship of God seems to have sprung up in their hearts, and as it was difficult for those who lived at any distance from

* In the Lessons of the Sunday School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition; these are called "Golden Texts." The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

Jerusalem to go up to the Temple very often during the year, they planted synagogues in every town of any size—some towns having more than one—so that all might have the opportunity of hearing the Law of God read and expounded, and of joining in public prayer to Him. The services of the synagogue were always held on the Sabbath-day, though sometimes more frequently, and it was our Lord's custom, we are told, to attend these services in whatever town He might be staying at the time. It was also customary for the president or "chief ruler" of the synagogue to give an opportunity to any strangers who might be present and who might wish to speak a word of exhortation or consolation to the congregation, of doing so; and Jesus seems to have availed Himself very frequently of these opportunities to teach and to "preach the Gospel of the Kingdom." Some of us, perhaps, may have thought how much we should like to have heard one of these sermons of Jesus; and we may have our desire partially gratified, for in Luke iv. 16-20 we have an account of one of the discourses our Lord delivered during this very tour in Galilee. There we shall find that Christ took a part of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah—very probably the lesson appointed to be read for the day in that synagogue—and after reading it He said to the people, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," adding, doubtless, many other words, and so preaching to them "the Gospel of the Kingdom."

But we must not forget that this was only one part of Christ's work during His ministry on earth. Some of those who heard Him say that "the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand," and that the ancient prophecies which foretold its gladness and glory were now to be fulfilled, might ask, "How are we to know that all this is true? What proof have we that this new Rabbi is not deceiving us in what He says?" The answer Christ made to this question was the second great part of His work on earth. He not only spoke wonderful words of wisdom and grace, but He *did* wonderful deeds of mercy and love: "He healed all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." Wherever the Gospel of the Kingdom was heard the Gospel of the Kingdom was seen, so that those who doubted whether Jesus was the long-looked-for Messiah or not, might say to themselves and to others, "Here is sufficient proof the Kingdom of Heaven has come, for is not the King here? Wherever He goes, disease and sickness flee from before His face." This was the reason why Christ called His miracles not only "mighty works," but "signs" as well.

Now we have this same evidence to fall back upon that Christ gave to the Jews. The evidential force of a supernatural work is not weakened because it was wrought eighteen hundred years ago. The meaning of a fact in the history of the world remains the same, however

long ago it happened ; and we can say to-day just as truly as Nicodemus said to the Lord Jesus : " Rabbi, we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with Him." Christ's miracles are still " signs " that the Christ has come into the world.

But they are more than signs. They teach as well as prove, and this is especially true of Christ's miracles of healing, all through which there runs an undertone of spiritual teaching, if we can only hear it. In healing men's bodily sicknesses Christ intended to point them to a more deadly disease from which they needed to be delivered—the disease of sin. This was why, as our Golden Text tells us, Christ " preached the Gospel of the Kingdom," but at the same time " healed all manner of disease among the people." This was why our Lord spent whole hours, perhaps even whole days, in the work of healing, and never left a town or village without leaving behind Him some homes that had been brightened and some hearts that had been comforted by the removal of sickness and of pain. And now we can see why it is that of the thirty-three miracles which the Gospels record in detail, no less than twenty-four were wrought on man, only nine being miracles of power over nature. It was not the physical universe so much as man himself that needed Christ's healing touch ; for just as the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, so the kingdom of evil is within us too. Our first need is to be " made whole " from the disease of sin.

There are many who quite forget this, and therefore do not understand what the " Gospel of the Kingdom " really is. They call it an education of the race, or a Divine development of humanity. But Christ did not. He said, " They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick ; " and the Gospel He preached was a remedy, not an education ; a cure for a terrible disease man had brought on himself—the disease of sin—not a development of the good that was in man. If Christ were only a great Teacher of morality, we might perhaps do without Him ; it is because He alone can save us from death that there is no " salvation in any other."

We must remember this constantly, even in teaching little children. A child very often bears in his body the seeds of the same disease as that from which his father died, although it is not until the child grows up to manhood that the disease develops itself. It is so with sin. It is not—and let us thank God it is not—fully developed in the heart of a child ; but the seeds of the evil are there. There is no child too young to pray to Christ that He would lay His hands on him and heal him.

FEB. 11.—“*Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in His commandments.*”—Psalm cxii. 1.

When the Kingdom of God was established among the Jews, and they became the people of God, He gave to them, by the hand of Moses, a Law, which was to be the rule and guide of their life. He also promised special blessings in this life to those who should obey that Law. Most of the Jews disregarded and disobeyed God's Law, but there were always some who remembered it and strove to keep it, and who “delighted greatly in God's commandments.” We fall into a great mistake when we think that God's Law was felt to be a terrible burden and dread by the saints of the Old Testament. On the contrary, they loved it and rejoiced in it; as one of them says, they “delighted in the way of God's testimonies as much as in all riches.” That Law could not have been a very “grievous commandment” which inspired Psalmist and Prophet to sing about it—for men do not usually sing about what they dread—or concerning which one could say, “Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.”

Now, when the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to establish the Kingdom of Heaven among men, He too began by the giving of a law. He did not, it is true, abolish the old and sacred law of Moses, He allowed it to be absorbed in the new law, just as the light of the stars is absorbed in the light of the day, but He claimed the right to interpret it, to expand it, and in many cases to declare its insufficiency for His kingdom. And beyond this, He laid down new laws of His own, some of which are contained in the Sermon on the Mount, and for the keeping of which He promised special blessings.

This is one of the many reasons that justify our belief in the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we read the Sermon on the Mount we find that Christ puts Himself not merely on a level with the Law of God, but on the same level as the Lawgiver Himself. We never hear St. Paul, or St. John, or St. James speak as Christ speaks here. We cannot imagine any teacher, however great and good, daring to put his own, “But I say unto you,” side by side with the Divine Law which the Jew had received from God, without something very like blasphemy. But Christ does this again and again. Even the people who listened to Him were struck by the assumption of authority running through all He said, giving to Christ's words such a difference in tone from anything they had been accustomed to hear from their religious teachers; and we read “they were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.” Clearly, only One who was Himself the King of the new kingdom could be justified in declaring what its laws were to be.

Now, if Christ has given us a law, it seems almost unnecessary to add that He intends that law to be kept. It would have been thought a very strange thing, a very needless addition to the Law of Moses, if after its promulgation Moses had gone on to assure the Children of Israel that God really meant His commandments to be obeyed. But this is what many who profess to be disciples of the Lord Jesus altogether forget when they listen to His commandments. They read them, or they hear sermons about them, but it does not seem to occur to them that Christ expects everyone who "heareth these sayings of His" to *do* them.

Perhaps this may arise from their forgetting, as we were saying last month, that Christ is a Prince as well as Saviour. They look to Jesus as the Sacrifice for the sins of the world, and they trust to His blood to cleanse them from all sin, or they seek His sympathy and love to sustain them in times of sorrow, or they endeavour to imitate Christ's example; but they do not often think of Him as their King and Lord whose commandments they are bound to obey. How many Christian people, for instance, would be startled if they were seriously told that Christ expected them to carry out the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount in their daily life! Take only one of these as an illustration. How few of us have ever solemnly realised that Christ means exactly what He says when He tells us to "forgive men their trespasses," because if we "forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our Father forgive our trespasses."

Or, some people may say they do not keep these commandments of Christ, because they cannot be kept. If, for example, they were literally to obey Christ's precept, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away," they would not only reduce themselves to beggary, but would be encouraging idleness and beggary. But, even if this were true of all Christ's commandments—and it is only true of a very few of them—it would be no reason for thinking Christ never meant them to be obeyed; it would only be a reason for doubting whether they had rightly understood what it was that they were to obey.

What we all really need is the spirit of this Golden Text, a heart that "delights greatly in His commandments." That spirit will very soon make all the difficult things in Christ's words plain to us, for love has eyes to see where everything else is blind.

And let us remember that Christ is not satisfied with us unless we do thus delight in His commandments. A grudging obedience, an obedience dictated by fear, Christ does not want. If love is wanting, everything Christ cares for is wanting. His own words are: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." Better an imperfect obedience

prompted by love than a perfect obedience compelled by fear. Only on those who "obey because they love, and love because they obey," will Christ's blessing come.

When we greatly "delight in His commandments," we shall find out the secret of the "blessed life."

FEB. 18.—"*The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*"—John i. 17.

This verse takes us back to the fourteenth. There St. John has been telling us that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth." Now, "grace and truth" were two of the attributes God expressly claimed for Himself when He appeared to Moses on the mount (Ex. xxxiv. 6), and proclaimed Himself to be "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness [or 'grace'] and truth;" so that when the Evangelist says Jesus was "full of grace and truth," he is saying that Jesus was God "manifest in the flesh." But, in the sixteenth verse, St. John goes on to say that of these inexhaustible riches of "grace and truth" which dwell in Christ we all "have received;" and not only so, but we have received "grace for grace," or, as the words ought to be translated, "grace in exchange for grace." Now, in this statement of St. John there is really contained a tacit contrast of the Gospel with the ancient Law—a contrast that is openly expressed in our Golden Text. For "the preposition, in exchange for, strictly characterises the legal system. Under the Law, a grace is received *in exchange for* some desert; but, in the new order of things, it is a grace received which becomes our title to receive a new grace. In no other way could the method of complete gratuitousness be better expressed."* So that we see how easily the contrast of the next verse is suggested: "For the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Let us try to understand the contrast.

Evidently it is a contrast, first of all, between *the way in which* the Law was given and the way in which the Gospel came into the world. The words St. John uses are very remarkable: "The Law *was given* by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The Law was given by a Voice; the Gospel came by a Person. You can separate Moses, in idea, from the Law altogether. Moses might never have existed, and yet God might have given the Jews His Law. If you take Moses away, you do not necessarily take away the Law. But we cannot say this of the Gospel; for, if you take away Jesus Christ, you take away at once all "the grace and truth" that "came" by Him. Moses

* Godet on St. John, vol. i. p. 375.

is separable from the Law; Christ is inseparable from the Gospel, for He and the Gospel are one. This is the first point of the contrast.

Perhaps it may also suggest to us the thought, too often forgotten even by Christians, that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, being the life and history of a Person, really has its foundation in a great historical fact. It is not philosophy, nor poetry, nor morality—it is history; and, because it is, it can never be destroyed. No reasoning can upset a fact: all the doubts of men can never succeed in doubting away an event. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," and, having once come into the world by Him, they have come for ever. The roots of the Tree of Life itself are planted in the solid ground of human history.

Then there is another point in the contrast between the Law and the Gospel that we must not overlook. Not only in the way in which each came, but in what each was in itself, are they contrasted. "*The Law* was given by Moses, but *grace and truth* came by Jesus Christ."

But this does not, of course, mean there were no grace and no truth in the Law. To say so would be to dishonour God, and not really to honour the Gospel. The Old Testament is full of the grace and truth which psalmist and prophet and saint found in God's ancient Law; nor is it wonderful they should have found it so when we remember that, though it was a Law, it was the Law given by a God of Love. There was a Gospel even in the Law.

Nor does St. John mean that there is no Law in the Gospel. There is law there too. Christ bids us "keep His commandments;" and, though redeemed by Him, we are still "under law to God."

Nevertheless, the Law was not the Gospel, nor is the Gospel the Law. Perhaps the true contrast between the two was never more truly or more beautifully expressed than by the late Dr. McLeod Campbell in his great work on "The Nature of the Atonement:" "The Law was a demand for Love; the Gospel is a revelation of Love." Or as Vinet somewhere puts it, "The Law said, Do this and live; the Gospel says, Live and do this."

This was why the Law was not a minister of grace to man. It was "weak through the flesh." It asked for what sinful man would not render, and so it "worked wrath." The Gospel gives first and asks afterwards, and so it brings "grace and truth."

"Grace," God's love, giving instead of demanding, pardoning instead of punishing, suffering Himself instead of inflicting suffering on us; and "Truth," the eternal truth concerning God, that He is Love, the everlasting thought of God revealed to man. Not a truth, mark, but "Truth," the whole truth of God Himself, is what St. John says "came by Jesus Christ;" so that all those who refuse to believe in Jesus Christ

not only miss the "grace of God" that is in Him, but they miss the Truth itself. They may be very learned and very clever men, but "the truth is not in them," and one day not only their conscience and their heart, but their intellect itself, will protest against the darkness they have brought upon themselves: On the other hand, I may be ignorant and unlearned, but if I have Christ, I have Him who is "the Truth," and it will be one of the joyful discoveries of heaven to find that having Him I have "all things" in Him,—even the key to all "the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" which here for a little while are "hid" in Him.

To sum all up, "the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The first word of the law was "Thou shalt;" the first word of Jesus was "Blessed."

FEB. 25.—"*Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.*"—Phil. iv. 6.

A better rendering of the first word in this verse would be, "Have no anxieties," that is, no harassing, distracting cares, "about anything." In the ordinary meaning of "careful," it is not only no sin to be "careful" about many things, it is our positive duty to be so. If I have a small income to support me, I ought to be careful how I spend it; or if I am in business, I ought to be careful how I conduct it; or if I am placed in a position of large responsibility, I ought to be careful how I discharge that responsibility.

And so with many other things. The Apostle, then, does not and cannot mean that we are not to take care about anything in life—he was far too practical a man to write impossible precepts to any Church; but this is what he does mean, that we are not to allow ourselves in anything to be distressed by anxious, harassing thought. He uses the same word that our Lord used when He said, "Take no thought for the morrow," and where it is evident Christ meant we were to take no care-burdened, anxious thought about the future.

Now, very many Christians altogether misread this text in the Epistle to the Philippians. They read it as if it were an exhortation, as if St. Paul were saying to the Philippian Church, "Surely care is very needless and foolish when you have the infinite resources of prayer open to you." But it is not an exhortation at all. It is a command; it is, in fact, one of those very commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ,—though here given through one of His Apostles—to which we were referring in the second of these papers on the Golden Texts for this month. But the practical result of their misreading of this verse is very serious. They are "careful" about many things, and "careful" in the very way that St. Paul has forbidden; but it does not occur to them that they

are sinning against Christ in being so. The care may trouble them, but the sin of the care never does. They have forgotten that this text is not an exhortation nor a permission, but a command, and a command Christ expects them to obey in their daily life. We do not put care in its right place until we put it among the sins, and so make Christ's disciples feel that to be "careful" is not only very grievous and harassing to themselves, but is an open dishonour done to the command of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then there are others who do not forget this text is a command, but who misread it, nevertheless.

They overlook the words "for nothing," and so, whilst they endeavour to lay the heavier burdens of care upon God, they think it unnecessary to take to Him the trifling, petty anxieties of their daily life. They try to bear these by themselves, and seldom realise that the precept "Be careful for nothing" makes little cares quite as truly sins as greater ones. Possibly, too, they have a secret, unconfessed feeling that some anxieties are really too small to be worthy of the care and notice of God.

Now against both these mistakes our text provides us with a safeguard. We are to be "careful *for nothing*," St. Paul tells us, because "*in everything* by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving," we are to let our "requests be made known unto God," or, in other words, if we want to live a life free from all care, we must live a life of constant prayer. Just as we take every want and care to God, He takes every care from us; and instead of our hearts being the battle-field of an armed host of anxieties and fears, God's own peace, the next verse assures us, shall "keep" or "stand sentry over"—for the term is a military one, and seems chosen for its striking paradox—"our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus," ready to attack and defeat any prowling troop of cares that threatens to molest us.

But is not this an impracticable ideal, after all? Can it really be possible for ordinary men and women thus to "live exempt from care"? Perhaps this is best answered by asking another question. Who was it that wrote this verse? Was it a man who himself had never known a care, and who was only laying down fine theories for us, theories he had never attempted to carry out in his own life? We know it was not. St. Paul was never a theorist, and least of all was he in this question of care, for very few of us have ever had to bear anything like the accumulation of anxiety and sorrow that daily rested on the Apostle. Once he tells us a little of all he had borne for Christ's sake (2 Cor. xi. 23-33), and a long and touching record of suffering it is; so that we may be sure that if such a man bids us to be "careful for nothing," it is because he has himself found it possible to live in perfect peace,

notwithstanding the pressure of continual trouble. Prayer taught St. Paul that secret; and only prayer will reveal it to us.

But even if we pray about everything, we have not then fulfilled all this verse enjoins upon us. St. Paul adds to prayer, "with thanksgiving," as if it were just as much a Christian's duty to praise God in every event of life, as to pray to Him at all times. Some of these Philippians might recall the wonderful example St. Paul had once set them of thus praising God. They might remember how nine or ten years before this epistle was written, Paul and Silas had been confined in the "inner prison" at Philippi; how their backs were torn and bleeding from the stripes they had received; how their feet were fastened in the stocks; and yet how at midnight they awoke the other prisoners by singing praises to God, or, as the history in the Acts tells us—and it is the best of all commentaries on this very text—"as they prayed and sang praises"—or rather, "as they prayed, were singing praises"—"unto God."

"As they prayed:" yes, this must come first. It does in St. Paul's precept in the text, it did in his own example. First prayer, continual prayer, then continual praise. If we imitate St. Paul's example, we shall find it easy to obey his precept.

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MR. TENNYSON'S "HAROLD."

A SONNET—"Show Day at Battle Abbey, 1876"—is prefixed to this Dramatic Poem:—

"Here rose the dragon-banner of our realm:
Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slandered King.
O garden blossoming out of English blood!
O strange hate-healer, Time! We stroll and stare
Where might made right eight hundred years ago."

This extract expresses the purpose of the dramatist, which is to give, clear, strong, and life-like, the picture of the last King of the English—the King chosen by the voice of the people, and thus foreshadowing our modern freedom-loving way of king-making. It is a theme specially fitted to a poet with whom the love of England—her might, and freedom, and honour—is a master-passion, as we may see in some of his finest lyrics. The critics have been hard upon Mr. Tennyson for this latest work—regarded as a drama or as a poem. The plot, they say, is simple to baldness, the characters are but shadows, the spirit is modern; there are wanting those elements of life and colour, the powerful grasp, the concentrated expression, the

play of humour, which heightens tragedy by contrast ; all the qualities, indeed, that go to the creation of a drama that is worthy to be put beside the immortal works of Shakespeare, with whom, they contend, Mr. Tennyson seeks to match himself. Nay, the very fact that he has chosen an historical subject is held to be proof that he lacks true dramatic genius, for in history—so runs the tide of criticism—the poet misses or evades the subjective interest in which the real power and merit of a drama are held to consist ; and thus, whoever takes historical characters as the subject of his verse confesses that he falls short of the dramatic faculty. There is a spice of truth in this view ; but when all is admitted, the merit of Mr. Tennyson's work stands virtually untouched. For ordinary readers, who do not care much about the æsthetics of criticism, "Harold" is a book which satisfies them, tried by a real test. Whoever takes it up and begins to read, will read on to the end, with unflagging attention and sustained interest.

The women are shadowy, doubtless : Edith is but faintly drawn ; Aldwyth, a possible Lady Macbeth, just misses the concentration of passion which might have made her a grandly tragic figure. Harold's sister, the Queen of Edward the Confessor, appears but once, for a brief scene, and shows a glimpse of character rather than a clear revelation of it. But these do practically as much as the action of the drama needs from them ; and in their various ways they subserve the purpose of the dramatist, and fulfil the requirements of his art, by helping to bring out into high relief the character of Harold, upon which the full force of the writer is expended. This, it cannot be denied, is a strong, real, and life-like portraiture. Those who know the great son of the great Earl Godwine in history, know him better now, through Mr. Tennyson's reading of him : they realise more clearly his personal traits, his habit of mind, his strength of will and force of action, his capacity to govern, and above all, his thorough Englishness—to coin a word—his devotion to England as a passion wholly distinct from and above the desire of place, or power, or renown for himself. This is the supreme note of Harold's character, as Mr. Tennyson draws it ; and no one who reads the play, without stopping at every scene to criticise, can resist the impression which the dramatist seeks to make, and does make. It is not only Harold who stands out sharp and clear, and marked by the power which detaches the real man from his traditional conditions, and sets him plain before us. We know Edward the Confessor, for example, better now than we ever knew him before, in his strange union of meekness and fierceness, in the positiveness that springs from weakness of character striving to assert strength, in the complacent self-consciousness that, so to speak, discounts saintliness for immediate gain of distinction. Another character, epitomised in a few

strong, vigorously conceived speeches—a portrait distinct as a head carved in cameo—is that of William, Count of Normandy, as Mr. Tennyson calls him; nowhere else in literature do we find such an exposition of his massive strength, his terrible passion, his craft and subtlety, his unconquerable and all-conquering will.

Some of the minor figures, though slightly drawn, leave an equally sharp and distinct impression. Thus, the rough, hearty honesty and loving trust of Harold's brother Gurth, the petulance of Tostig, the savage boastfulness of Harold Hardrada, the Norwegian invader, are wonderfully well given; and so is the cynical humour of Stigand, the uncanonical archbishop, true Saxon, boldly defiant of Rome, yet somewhat distrustful of his own powers, because he had his pallium from an anti-pope. But beyond, beneath, and above the impression made by individual characters, the aim and object of the drama are brought out constantly before the reader. It is the shame, the dishonour, the fraud, and the utter brutality and lawlessness of the Norman conquest that Mr. Tennyson desires to paint for us—the union of robber force and priestly arrogance—the double wrong of Papal and military invasion, aimed for personal ends against national life, patriotic design, and the free choice of a ruler by a free people. This, as we read it, is the intention of "Harold," and also as we read it this intention is clearly fulfilled. Such a purpose, so fulfilled, marks the measure of Mr. Tennyson's success. Whether "Harold" is or is not a good acting play is little to us; whether or not Mr. Tennyson takes rank with the greatest masters of dramatic art is little also. If a book is to be judged by the true standard—that it does what its author wishes it to do—then "Harold" is a success, for it does this beyond question. We may prefer the Arthurian poems as the form in which history and legend may be most gracefully mingled; we may choose "In Memoriam," or "The Princess," as the highest manifestation of Mr. Tennyson's poetic skill; but we are not disposed to fall in with the general tide of carping criticism, and are willing, rather, to take what a poet thinks best to offer to us, and to be thankful for it.

The play opens in London, in Edward the Confessor's palace, the courtiers and the people, disturbed by the appearance of a comet—which is held to presage trouble to the land, the

"Grimly-glaring, treble-brandish'd scourge of England."

Stigand, the Archbishop, is appealed to for an explanation of it—"Stigand," says Earl Leofwin, "should know the purposes of Heaven." But Stigand, doubtful of himself, and somewhat unbelieving, declines the task:—

"Not I. I cannot read the face of heaven.
 Perhaps our vines will grow the better for it.
 I am a bane to England.
 Old uncanonical Stigand—ask of *me*,
 Who had my pallium for an anti-pope!
 Not me the man—for in our windy world
 What's up is faith, what's down is heresy."

Harold enters, and Stigand asks him—"him, our broad Earl,"—"Is that the doom of England?" To whom Harold, not much troubled by signs, whether in earth or heaven:—

"Why not the doom of all the world as well?
 For all the world sees it as well as England.
 These meteors came and went before our day,
 Not harming any: it threatens us no more
 Than French or Norman."

King Edward, however, takes a gloomier view. To him the comet is a terrible warning of woe to come:—

"In heaven signs!
 Signs upon earth! signs everywhere! your priests
 Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearn'd!
 They scarce can read their Psalter; and your churches;
 Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Normanland
 God speaks through abler voices, as He dwells
 In statelier shrine. I say not this, as being
 Half Norman blooded, nor, as some have held,
 Because I love the Norman better—no,
 But dreading God's revenge upon this realm
 For narrowness and coldness: and I say it
 For the last time perchance, before I go
 To find the sweet refreshment of the Saints.
 I have lived a life of utter purity:
 I have builded the great church of Holy Peter:
 I have wrought miracles—to God the glory—
 And miracles will in my name be wrought
 Hereafter. I have fought the fight and go—
 I see the flashing gates of pearl—
 And it is well with me, tho' some of you
 Have scorned me—ay—but after I am gone
 Woe, woe to England! I have had a vision:
 The seven sleepers in the cave at Ephesus
 Have turn'd from right to left."

There is a fine touch of scorn—too modern, perhaps, in spirit, for his day—in Harold's answer:—

"My most dear master,
 What matters? let them turn from left to right,
 And sleep again."

Harold then petitions for a respite from the cares of State—leave to go to Normandy, to see and release his young brother, Wulfnoth,

detained there as a hostage by Duke William. With a presage of the calamity that was to come of this visit, Edward refuses leave ; but yields finally permission for a visit to Flanders. The scene closes with a dispute between Harold and his brother Tostig, Earl of Northumbria, and the favourite of Edward and the Queen, whom Harold reproves, without effect, for his misgovernment. One touch here is finely Tennysonian. Tostig proposes to crush discontent :—

“Crush it at once

With all the power I have !

HAROLD—

Make not thou

The nothing something. Wisdom when in power
And wisest, should not frown as power, but smile,
As kindness, watching all, till the true *must*,
Shall, make her strike as Power ; but when to strike—
O Tostig, O dear brother !—If they prance,
Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear and run,
And break both wheel and axle.”

In the next scene we have Harold and Edith—she made by Mr. Tennyson a ward of the King, instead of, as tradition has it, the mistress of Harold. Edith sings, waiting the approach of her affianced husband :—

“Love is come with a song and a smile,
Welcome love with a smile and a song ;
Love can stay but a little while.
Why cannot he stay ? They call him away :
Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong ;
Love will stay for a whole life long.”

Here, again, Harold is warned against his journey to Normandy, for thence, as Edith sees, the Fates will carry him to his hurt. Here, too, we have disclosed a new danger for him, the ambitious love of Aldwyth, daughter of Earl Algar—the great foe of the house of Godwine, and widow of Griffyth, King of Wales, defeated and slain by Harold. Aldwyth overhears the lovers' talk, and confesses to herself her own love for Harold :—

“Griffyth I hated : why not hate the foe
Of England ? Griffyth, when I saw him flee,
Chased, deer-like, up his mountains, all the blood
That should have only pulsed for Griffyth, beat
For his pursuer. I love him, or think I love him :
If he were King of England, I his Queen,
I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love him.”

Then Edith, she exclaims—

“She must be cloister'd somehow, lest the King
Should yield his ward to Harold's will. What harm ?
She hath but blood enough to live, not love.”

Then she fears detection in her plots and schemes—her design to work upon Edward's superstitious weakness, to put away Edith, to crown Harold, to wed him, he King, she Queen, the houses of Alfgar and Godwine united, and the whole realm theirs :—

“ If he find me thus,
Harold might hate me ; he is broad and honest,
Breathing an easy gladness—not like Aldwyth,
For which I strangely love him.”

The second act brings Harold to Normandy, driven out of his course, and wrecked ; then captive to Guy, Count of Ponthieu, then sold by him to Duke William, whose guest he is at Bayeux, detained in honourable captivity, until William has confessed his heart's desire, and made Harold his “ man,” so that by such help the crown of England, at Edward's death, may be won for the Norman. It is a double treachery that William meditates. Harold is his guest, but he will coerce him ; Harold has helped him in war with his rebellious vassals, but he will repay the service by luring the Englishman to his ruin. William Malet, a knight half English, half Norman, instigated by William to work upon Harold, counsels his master to let the captive go. For answer, William shadows forth his project—the memorable oath upon the hidden relics of the Saints :—

“ Simple ! let fly the bird within the hand,
To catch the bird again within the bush !
No.
Smooth thou my way, before he clash with me ;
I want his voice in England for the crown,
I want thy voice with him to bring him round ;
And being brave he must be subtly cow'd,
And being truthful wrought upon to swear
Vows that he dare not break.”

Malet follows the course sketched for him by William, the Duke himself uses alternately the arts of persuasion and threatening, Wulfnoth, the brother of Harold, pleads for consent as the price of his own freedom. Poor Wulfnoth pleads hard. If Harold will not yield, then

“ I
Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no more
Make blush the maiden-white of our tall cliffs,
Nor mark the seabird rouse himself and hover
Above the windy ripple, and fill the sky
With free sea-laughter.
I see the blackness of my dungeon loom
Across their lamps of revel, and beyond
The merriest murmurs of their banquet clank
The shackles that will bind me to the wall.

So, pressed on all sides, Harold yields. England has need of him ; Edith waits for him ; Tostig sets Northumbria in flames ; Edward is dying ; and he, the champion, ruler, liberator, King, is pent within a Norman prison-house. There is no help but to promise to be William's man, and then to break the pledge. Still, Harold palters with himself, striving to be untruly true :—

“MALET—I thank thee now for having saved thyself.

HAROLD—For having lost myself to save myself,
Said ‘ay’ when I meant ‘no,’ lied like a lad
That dreads the pendent scourge, said ‘ay’ for ‘no’ !
Ay ! No !—he hath not bound me by an oath—
Is ‘ay’ an oath ? Is ‘ay’ strong as an oath,
Or is it the same sin to break my word
As break mine oath ? He call’d my word my bond !
He is a liar who knows I am a liar,
And makes believe that he believes my word.
The crime be on his head : not bounden—no.”

But the oath has to follow the word. The doors of the throne-chamber are flung open ; William is robed ; beside him are prelates and nobles ; before them is a chest covered with cloth of gold. Upon this chest, and in presence of this assembly, must Harold swear to help William to the crown of England. Again he falters. Knowing that he means to break his word, he shrinks from enforcing it by an oath. Prompted once more by Malet and by Wulfnoth, he yields again, and swears. Now William triumphs, and withdrawing the cover from the chest shows him by what he has sworn—

“The holy bones of all the canonised,
From all the holiest shrines in Normandy.”

Harold recoils from the sight, with a cry of “Horrible !” echoed by William, who answers his inmost thought :—

“Ay, for thou hast sworn an oath
Which, if not kept, would make the hard earth rive
To the very Devil’s horns, the bright sky cleave
To the very feet of God, and send her hosts
Of injured saints to scatter sparks of plague
Thro’ all your cities, blast your infants, dash
The torch of war among your standing corn,
Dabble your hearths with your own blood.—Enough !
Thou wilt not break it ! I, the Count—the King—
Thy friend—am grateful for thine honest oath.”

Now Harold is free, but yet bound ; fettered by his oath ; tied by the dread of sacrilege, by fear of Heaven’s vengeance for warring against the witness of the Saints. Yet still he revolts against the deceit, and nerves himself to defiance. These Norman saints, he will stand up manfully

against them, and take his chance with God. His agony and passion are finely painted :—

"Juggler and bastard—bastard—he hates that most—
William the tanner's bastard ! Would he heard me !
O God, that I were in some wide, waste field
With nothing but my battle-axe and him
To spatter his brains ! Why, let earth rive, gulf in
These cursed Normans—yea and mine own self.
Cleave Heaven, and send thy Saints that I may say
Ev'n to their faces, 'If ye side with William
Ye are not noble.' How their pointed fingers
Glared at me ! Am I Harold, Harold, son
Of our great Godwin ? Lo ! I touch mine arms,
My limbs—they are not mine—they are a liar's—
I mean to be a liar—I am not bound—
Stigand shall give me absolution for it."

Harold is now back in England again—free, but bound ; the shadow that is to darken his life, and end it in blackness, is upon him. It falls with quickly thickening gloom. As the third act opens, King Edward is dying. Harold and Archbishop Stigand watch him. Stigand roughly paints his character as the Confessor lies drooping in a trance.

Edward wakes, dazed. He has seen a vision, and he tells it to the wonder-stricken Court :—

"A great Angel past along the highest,
Crying, 'The doom of England.'"

Then his mind wanders to his great Abbey at Westminster, just finished, and awaiting consecration :—

"I have built the Lord a house—
Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden cherubim
With twenty-cubit wings from wall to wall.
I have built the Lord a house—sing, Asaph ! clash
The cymbal, Heman ! Blow the trumpet, priest !
Fall cloud, and fill the house—lo ! my two pillars,
Jachin and Boaz.

It is finish'd !
The kingliest abbey in all Christian lands ;
The lordliest, loftiest minster ever built
To holy Peter in our English isle !
Let me be buried there, and all our kings,
And all our just and wise and holy men
That shall be born hereafter."

Then Edward turns to Harold. If the people choose him, he shall be King, despite his oath, and Stigand has absolved him of that ; but Stigand is uncanonical. Aldred, a true archbishop, shall confirm his shrift.

Still Edward is not satisfied. The Norman Saints are "mightier than the Saxon," and Harold has sworn by them. There must be a sacrifice to avert the doom, and Edith—vowed by the dying King to the cloister—must be the offering. Edith falls by the King's couch; Harold calls wildly upon her: he will not swear a second oath, to break it,—though Aldred counsels submission:

"ALDRED—The more the love, the mightier is the prayer;
The more the love, the more acceptable
The sacrifice of both your loves to Heaven.
No sacrifice to Heaven, no help from Heaven—
That runs through all the faiths of all the world."

The doom is imminent and dreadful, so the sacrifice must be complete, to avert it. There are signs of "shadowing horror," signs in earth and heaven. At Senlac one has heard

"A ghostly horn
Blowing continually, and faint battle hymns,
And cries, and clashes, and groans of men;
And dreadful shadows strove upon the hill,
And dreadful lights crept up from out the marsh—
Corpse-candles gliding over nameless graves.

EDWARD—(*Waking*) Senlac! Sanguelac!
The Lake of Blood!

STIGAND—This lightning before death
Plays on the word, and Normanises too!

EDWARD—Thou uncanonical fool!
Wilt thou play with the thunder? North and South
Thunder together, showers of blood are blown
Before a never-ending blast, and hiss
Against the blaze they cannot quench—a lake,
A sea of blood—we are drown'd in blood—for God
Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has drawn the bow—
Sanguelac! Sanguelac! the arrow! the arrow!"

So, with words of doom upon his lips, the Confessor dies, and amidst gloom and doubt Harold is crowned King, with the curse resting on him.

But Harold is brave at heart. He would defy the curse of the dead King, marry Edith, fight the Normans, and keep England whole and his, if Edith would but share his throne, and lift her courage to his own. She is torn between love of Harold and fear of the vengeance of Heaven. Harold combats, without conquering, her despairing mood. She answers:—

"Ask me not,
Lest I should yield it, and the second curse
Descend upon thine head, and thou be only
King of the moment over England.

HAROLD—O God! I cannot help it, but at times
 They seem to me too narrow, all the faiths
 Of this grown world of ours, whose baby eye
 Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise, I fear
 This curse, and scorn it. But a little light!
 And on it falls the shadow of the priest;
 Heaven yield us more!"

But Edith is firm in her sacrifice. She to the cloister,—he to marry Aldwyth, and thus unite England, and avert the curse. News comes of a double blow: Harold Hardrada, with Earl Tostig, are landed in the north. William of Normandy, blessed by the Pope, is preparing to invade the south. "The Pope," cries Gurth—

"He hath cursed thee, and all those who fight for thee,
 And given thy realm of England to the Bastard."

HAROLD—Ha! ha!

EDITH—Oh, laugh not! Strange and ghastly is the gloom
 And shadowing of this double thunder-cloud
 That lours on England.—Laughter!

HAROLD—No, not strange!
 This was old human laughter in old Rome
 Before a Pope was born, when that which reign'd
 Call'd itself God. A kindly rendering
 Of 'render unto Caesar'! The Good Shepherd!
 Take this, and render that.

GURTH—They have taken York

HAROLD—The Lord was God, and came as man—the Pope
 Is man, and comes as God. York taken.

GURTH—Yea, Tostig hath taken York!

HAROLD—To York, then. Edith!
 Had'st thou been braver, I had better braved
 All—but I love thee and thou me—and that
 Remains beyond all chances, and all churches,
 And that thou knowest.

EDITH—Ay, but take back thy ring.
 It burns my hand—a curse to thee and me.
 I dare not wear it.

HAROLD—But I dare. God with thee!

EDITH—(alone) The King hath cursed him, if he marry me;
 The Pope hath cursed him, marry me or no!
 God help me! I know nothing—can but pray
 For Harold—pray, pray, pray—no help but prayer,
 A breath that fleets beyond this iron world,
 And touches Him that made it."

Now the action shifts to Northumbria, and we have in quick succession the meeting of the armies, the battle of Stamford Bridge, the death of Tostig, King Harold Hardrada slain, and the marriage of Harold with Aldwyth—a union of policy with him, of ambitious love with her, contracted in the hope of pacifying Edwin and Morcar, her brothers, and of bringing them to fight against the Norman invader—a hope

unfulfilled. Then, as they sit feasting after the victory over the Norsemen, and the sacrifice of the marriage—the loss to Harold for ever of his

“ Poor white dove, who flutters
Between him and the porch ”—

there comes hasty news of the landing of Duke William and his host ; and Harold marches southward to the Sussex Downs to meet his doom.

The close of the drama now draws night : Harold is in his tent on a mound overlooking the field of Senlac ; about him the Saxon soldiers, before him the Norman host. A monk has come from William to remind him of his oath, and to bid him refer the cause to Rome, and to the witness of the Saints who heard his promise. To him Harold gives answer plain and strong :—

“ Should they not know free England crowns herself,
Not know that he nor I had power to promise ?

Back to that juggler.

Tell him the Saints are nobler than he dreams,
Tell him that God is nobler than the Saints,
And tell him we stand arm'd on Senlac Hill,
And bide the doom of God.”

But, when alone with his brother Gurth, the firmness of Harold wavers. He recounts a portent at Waltham Abbey—his own foundation :—

“ I cast me down prone, praying ; and when I rose
They told me that the Holy Rood had lean'd
And bow'd above me : whether that which held
Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were bound
To that necessity which binds us down ;
Whether it bow'd at all but in their fancy ;
Or, if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd ruin
Or glory, who shall tell ? but they were sad,
And somewhat sadden'd me.”

Then he sleeps, and in a vision—modelled upon that in Richard the Third—the spirits of Edward, of Wulfnoth, of Tostig, and of the Norman Saints disturb him with the ominous menace of Senlac, Sanguelac, the Lake of Blood, the burden of the Confessor's dying dream. Against them Harold, saddened still, and full of dire presage, yet argues nobly with himself :—

“ I shall die—

I die for England then, who lived for England—
What nobler ? men must die.
I cannot fall into a falser world—
I have done no man wrong,
. . . . Is it possible

That mortal men should bear their earthly heats
 Into yon bloodless world, and threaten us thence
 Unschool'd of death? . . . No—our waking thoughts
 Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the pools
 Of sullen slumber, and arise again
 Disjointed; only dreams—where mine own self
 Takes part against myself! Why? for a spark
 Of self-disdain born in me when I swear
 Falsely to him, the falser Norman, over
 His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by whom
 I knew not that I swore,—not for myself—
 For England—yet not wholly."

Aldwyth comes to him: he bids her go:—

"Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's ear
 To part me from the woman that I loved!
 Thou didst arouse the fierce Northumbrians!
 Thou hast been false to England and to me,
 As, in some sort, I have been false to thee.
 Leave me. No more. Pardon on both sides. Go."

Edith comes to him. His love for her breaks out—the master-passion;
 but love mingled with dread. Now that she is strong he is weak. The
 ring she refused is on his hand: he goes into battle with it: his last
 thought is for her safety. Their parting is a last, long, silent embrace.
 And now at last Harold knows his fate—

"The sign in heaven—the sudden blast at sea—
 My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the dark dreams—
 The Pope's Anathema—the Holy Rood
 That bow'd to me at Waltham—
 I, the last English King of England."

Now Harold passes from the scene, but not from sight, for Edith and
 Stigand watch the battle, and the varying fortunes of the great fight are
 told in a magnificent scene, Stigand describing to Edith what he sees,
 she mingling cries and prayers, the monks of Waltham breaking in
 between with stanzas of a Latin hymn. Gurth is slain, Leofwin also.
 Harold

"Stands between the banners with the dead
 So piled about him he can hardly move."

Then the Normans shoot their arrows into the sky, they fall upon
 the defenders of the English lines; an exclamation from Stigand tells
 the end:—

"Sanguelac—Sanguelac—the arrow,—the arrow!—away!"

The last scene pictures the finding of Harold's body—Edith and
 Aldwyth the searchers. It is Edith who finds him:—

"ALDWYTH—They have so maimed and murder'd all his face
 There is no man can swear to him."

EDITH—But one woman!

Look you, we never mean to part again.

I have found him, I am happy.

Was there not someone ask'd me for forgiveness?

I yield it freely, being the true wife

Of this dead King, who never bore revenge.

For, look, our marriage ring.

[She draws it from the finger of Harold.]

I lost it somehow—

I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.

That bred the doubt; but I am wiser now,

I am too wise. Will none among you all

Bear me true witness—only for this once—

That I have found it here again?

And thou,

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore!



LAW, MIRACLE, AND PRAYER:

A PARABLE FOR THE TIMES.

TWO children—brother and sister—were once crossing the ocean in a steamship. The captain was a relative, and showed them much kindness. They had never been on board a steamer before. The great engines attracted much of their attention. They used to stand in a safe place, and look down into the engine-house, and watch the huge, smooth, regular movements of this colossal Thing that propelled the ship. How it did this, they could not understand; and indeed they were too young to have understood any explanation. But, as they watched, they were not long in perceiving that there was a fixed order and regularity in the movement. How the whole thing had been set in motion, they could not tell; they had never seen it, except in action; and, at whatever hour of the day they might come to look at it, there it was—always moving on, in the same manner, and with the same regularity. They had asked some of the sailors whether it did not rest during the night; and the sailors told them that it kept moving on, in just the same way, all the time they were sleeping.

Now, sometimes these two children used to discuss the question whether this engine could be stopped, and whether their friend the captain had any power over its movements. The little girl, who had great faith in the captain, was sure that he could stop the machine whenever he pleased. She argued that the engine must have been set a-going, when the ship started, although they had not seen it done. Besides, at the end of the voyage, would not the captain have to stop the vessel? and, to do that, would he not require to stop the machinery? Now,

if he had power to set it in motion at the beginning, and had power to stop it at the end, surely he had power also to stop it at any time he pleased. Besides, she had asked some of the sailors; and they had told her that the captain could stop the engine, and that, indeed, once or twice—not often, but once or twice—they had seen him stop it, even on the voyage. So she, for her part, believed the sailors.

But the boy, who was a little sceptic in his way, was not so sure about it. He did not know when or how the engine had been set a-going; perhaps the captain had nothing to do with that: the machinery had always been moving, since *they* knew anything about it. And how did they know what would happen at the end of the voyage? For anything he knew, the ship might then be stopped, and yet the machinery might keep going on; or perhaps the engine might wear its strength out; or perhaps, if those great fires below had really anything to do with the matter, the captain, when they were getting near the end of their voyage, might give orders that the fires should be allowed to go out. But that at any moment, in the middle of the voyage, whilst the fires were all burning, and the great machine was in full motion, the captain could suddenly stop it—this was difficult to believe. How could he stop it? If he were to thrust his arm in, it would only be crushed! Besides, even if he were able, somehow or other, to stop the machinery, it did not follow that he *had* ever interfered with its regular movements. True, a few sailors said they had seen him do so; but even they said they had only seen this once or twice; and perhaps the sailors were mistaken, or perhaps they were even “telling a story.” Yes; on the whole, he thought it more likely the sailors were telling a lie, than that this huge, ponderous engine had ever been suddenly stopped in mid-ocean!

Thus, then, the little boy and girl used to argue the matter; only, of course, in their own childish fashion and language. One day the boy was playing on deck with a large, bright-coloured ball, when suddenly it bounded over the side of the ship and fell into the sea. He was in great trouble about this, and ran at once to tell his sister, who happened at the moment to be sitting on the captain's knee. “Oh, captain!” she said, looking up beseechingly into his face, “stop the engines, and get the ball!” The captain only smiled, and quietly shook his head. “Oh, captain!” she said again, “I know you can do it, if only you will; do be kind, and stop the engines!” But the captain, stroking her hair, smiled again, and said, “What! stop that great machine and this great ship, for *that*? No; little boys must learn to be more careful of their balls!” He looked and spoke so kindly, that the little girl did not lose her faith in him; but, for all that, she thought it strange that a friend so kind and good to children did not stop the ship, when her

brother was so vexed about losing his beautiful ball. As for the boy, he was now quite confirmed in his opinion that the captain either could not stop the engines in mid-ocean, or at least never had done it, and never would do it—whatever a few sailors might say.

One day, however—not long after—as they were both standing together near the captain, and looking down into the engine-house, they heard a sudden shriek, and then a cry: "Man overboard!" Then, in a moment, they saw the captain give a sign; and then they heard the cry, "Stop her!"—and then, in another moment, the great engine seemed somehow to get a sudden check, and began, as it were, to pant, and to move slowly, as if it were out of breath; and then presently it came to a standstill—and the ship too. And, meanwhile, some one had thrown a life-buoy to the poor sailor who had fallen overboard; and there he was, swimming towards the life-buoy; and presently he caught it; and then they drew him in by the rope, and he was saved. Whereupon the captain suddenly gave another sign, and the huge engine began once more to move, and in a very little time it was moving at its former speed. Only a few minutes had passed altogether, and there was the machine working away again with the old, ponderous regularity of movement, just as if it had never been and could not be interfered with! Then the little boy saw, not only that the captain could at once stop the engine when he pleased, but also that he did stop it, and would stop it, *whenever he thought there was sufficient reason.*

A few days afterwards, as the little girl was standing with a large doll in her arms, looking down into the engine-house, the doll slipped out of her arms and fell into the midst of the machinery—she could not tell where—away out of her sight. She began to cry; but she thought of her friend the captain, and was for rushing off at once, to ask him to get her doll for her. But her brother, who had now (with his way of it) become quite a little philosopher, stopped her. "What is the use," said he, "of going to the captain? Very likely your doll is all crushed to pieces by this time. Besides, the captain would have to stop the engines, in order to get it; and do you think a doll lost is like a man overboard? You shouldn't bother the captain about such things!" But the little girl was not to be hindered. She knew the captain was kind, and she had great faith in what he could do. "Well, he won't be angry with me," she said, "for asking him. He will be sorry that I've lost my doll. He may perhaps be able to get it for me. I need not ask him to stop the engines; perhaps he may be able to get it without doing that. I cannot tell. I can at least ask him." "Very well," says the little philosopher, "you may go; but it is all of no use. I'll tell you beforehand what he will say to you: 'Little girls must just

earn to be more careful of their dolls'!" But the girl persisted and went to her friend, and said, "Oh, captain! it was very careless of me, and I am so sorry; but I have let my doll fall down amongst the engines, and I don't know where it is. Do you think you could get it for me? I don't ask you to stop the engines; but, if it is possible, I wish I could have it again." And the captain was greatly pleased with the child's confidence, and he felt sorry for her loss; and so he smiled, and said, "Well, well, we shall see what can be done." It was not a very definite promise; but the little girl had faith in her friend, and believed that he would do what was wise and kind. The loss of the doll might not be a sufficient reason for stopping the engines; but the fact that the captain could and did stop the engines for a man overboard might be a sufficient reason why she should trust him in her own trouble. And the captain went down into the engine-room, and spent some time in looking for the doll. At length he spied it in an out-of-the-way corner, not much the worse for the fall. It gave him some trouble to reach it, but he took the trouble; for he knew how much pleasure he would give the child. And the brother and sister waited, and watched the engines, and saw that they never stopped. But, after a while, the captain came back, and said, "Well, here, you see, is your pretty doll; but, you know, little girls should be more careful!" Then the child kissed and thanked him, and loved him more than ever. But the boy grew jealous, and forgot all his philosophy, and thought that his sister was a "pet" of the captain's; and he began to quarrel with her, and said, "Oh, yes, he can take pains and trouble about *your* doll; but he does not at all care when I lose *my* ball!" But he was wrong once more; for, when they all came ashore at the end of the voyage, the good captain surprised him by buying for him a larger and more beautiful ball than the one he had lost at sea.

This story is a parable; and, like all other parables, it has its necessary failures of analogy. But perhaps it may help to show how, even in front of the unchanging laws of Nature, we may cling to a reasonable faith both in the historical fact of Miracles, and in the present power of Prayer.

No one doubts that there once lived in Palestine a man called "Jesus of Nazareth." No one doubts that the four Gospels represent this Jesus as an extraordinary Being. His recorded entrance into the world and final departure from the world are each so unique as to be fairly called "supernatural"—meaning by that word that they were altogether *out of the ordinary line of cause and effect in Nature*. He is represented also as doing extraordinary works, such as stilling the tempest, turning water into wine, healing the sick by a word, and even bringing back the dead to life—works which it is utterly beyond the power of man to

accomplish by means of any known processes or appliances of Nature.

Now, there are many who simply refuse to believe these records. With them it is a foregone conclusion that Miracles are impossible, or, if not impossible, at least so improbable as to be incredible. They stand in presence of the Laws of Nature—those mighty wheels which move on with such constant and undeviating order; and they refuse to believe there has ever been a single break in this regularity of movement. They think it far more likely that all stories of Miracles are due either to the delusions or falsehoods of men, than that the Miracles actually happened.

But now, suppose we put the matter thus: What are the "Laws of Nature"? Are they "Laws" which the Creator is bound to obey? Or is not the word "Law" here simply a name for the discovered Order according to which God chooses usually to operate in the sphere of Nature? Is there anything to prove that this Order never had a beginning, or that it never will have an end? Cannot the Almighty—if He pleases, and when He pleases—deviate from this usual Order? Can He not interfere with His own machinery? *Can He not break the regularity of movement, if He will?*

The Theist answers: This is not a question of what God *can* do, but of what He *has done*. We do not say that Miracles are absolutely impossible; we only deny that they have ever happened. We say it is not likely that God would at all deviate from an Order which His own perfect wisdom has prearranged; and we further say that no mere testimony is of itself adequate to convince us that He has everdone so.

I reply: But may not the blending of fixed Law and occasional Miracle be itself the highest possible manifestation of perfect Wisdom? What if the very wisest thing to be done was to establish a regular Order in Nature, and then—now and again—to depart from it for certain special and important ends? We may be told that, if we really believe in Miracles, we ought even nowadays to kneel down and pray that paralysis may be cured in a moment, or that our dead may be brought back to life. But we have simply no warrant for asking God to work such Miracles merely to meet our own wishes and longings; and therefore we do not offer such prayers. It does not follow, however, that there have been no Miracles in the past, because our wishes may not be a "sufficient reason" for working them now. *The captain may not stop the engines for a boy's ball; but, for all that, he may have stopped them to save a man from drowning.* The Miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ stand in direct relation to the salvation of perishing humanity. They were not wrought merely to gratify this or that individual; they were manifestations of Himself as the Saviour of the world. *Our*

belief in His Miracles is therefore not founded on bare testimony. We have testimony indeed, but we have also the presentation to our minds and hearts of *a sufficient reason.* The Advent of Christ was a crisis in the world's history. To save mankind from spiritual death, to rescue humanity, struggling in the dark waters of atheism and sin, and to bring it into a state of faith in the Heavenly Father—this we may surely regard as a worthy reason for the miraculous incarnation of the Son of God, for those wondrous works which “manifested forth His glory,” and for the Resurrection and Ascension which proclaimed Him the conqueror of death and the ever-living Saviour of man. In the light of this “sufficient reason” for Miracles, we can hold fast our faith in them as historical facts, even in front of the great Order of Nature.

But it may be said: Well, you admit, at any rate, that the age of Miracles is now past; and therefore it is a foolish thing to pray for material blessings.

I reply: That to pray for material blessings is not necessarily to ask for a Miracle. *A captain may be so tender-hearted as to give back to a little girl her lost doll; and yet he may not need to stop the engines.* If God is my friend, He will not be angry when I lay my desires before Him. If the Lord Jesus Christ is the Captain and Ruler of the Universe, He may be able to come to my relief in ways of which I know nothing. His Miracles have revealed both His power and His love. The Miracles were exceptional; but the power and love are abiding. And so, in prayer, I make my appeal to the Divine Will. I do not ask for what I know to be a Miracle. But I am only as a little child in the presence of a Divine Friend; and, for aught I know, He may be able to grant my request without any deviation from the Order of Nature. It *may* be that I am asking what He cannot wisely bestow. But, on the other hand, it *may* be that, in answer to prayer, He can and will come to my help, without working any Miracle. And so I cry, “Father, if it be possible!” and there I leave it. Nor need I imagine that those who get their requests are the petted favourites of Heaven. Rather let me believe that if, in response to the prayer of faith, God does not give me what I ask, *He will doubtless give me, by and by, that which is far better.*

T. C. F.



A HINT FROM AMERICA.

[The following Article from the Boston *Watchman* contains some hints which are worth thinking of on this side of the Atlantic.—ED.]

COMMEND your pastor when he does well, but do not flatter him. There is a difference between flattery and sincere praise. Flattery takes into account chiefly the so-called smartness of the minister, his eloquence, his scholarship; but sincere commendation for the good he is doing regards first his spiritual qualities, such as his knowledge of Christian experience, his skill in guiding the minds of others through theoretical and practical difficulties, his faithfulness in warning his flock against the perils in their way, his personal piety. Hence flattery may injure him, by directing his attention to his external qualifications for his sacred office, and by inflating his vanity; while discreet and heart-felt praise usually humbles him who receives it, while at the same time it helps him to overcome discouragements, and cheers him for his arduous tasks.

There is a difference between the proper appreciation and praise of the pastor, and that vice of modern Christendom which leads many to run from church to church where sensations are advertised, or where it is supposed some new sort of eloquence can be heard. In all communities we have a class of religious Arabs, who travel from oasis to oasis for a drink of water and a handful of dates, who have no religious home, and who lead a useless, nay, a pernicious life. The Arab lives in a desert, though he finds here and there an oasis. Nor does he cause the desert to bloom: on the contrary, he leaves the oasis he visits less green than before his coming. He lives in hunger and thirst, without contributing to the sustenance of his fellows. It is no proof of usefulness when the minister attracts such persons by his sermons; nor is it any compliment to say that he wins their praise. Stay at home. Cultivate the field God has given you. Commend the diligence and skill of the hard-working man who is the "Lord's husbandman" in it, and so encourage him. His task is heavy; and he needs your help and your words of cheer.

There is also a great difference between the worship some persons render a favourite minister and the commendation which is proper. Nothing can be more disgusting to a mind rightly constituted than the adoration which sees in a mortal man none of the frailties common to humanity, and which is content to take his lightest word, without intelligent thought or criticism, as a divine authority. Some persons are Papists by nature, and must believe in the infallibility of their spiritual guides, and surrender to them all power of reason and decision. But

the natural Papist is a thin and poor character, into which but little good can be infused, and from which little good can be derived. Moreover, such persons are the worst foes of the minister, not only because they appeal to his vanity, but because they expect him, in return, to deem them perfect, and are instantly offended if he is faithful to their souls. Not only so, but when they discover any of his defects, the image before which they had bowed becomes an accursed thing, and in their surprise and disappointment they are as severe as before they were foolishly confiding. Let the minister beware of his worshippers; they will become his enemies; for worship demands perfection in its object; and if it do not find this, the worshipper, being convicted of folly, turns upon his idol, as if it were to blame, and breaks it in pieces. But we may commend the pastor for the excellence of his work, while recognising his human frailties, and while viewing them with such charity as we should extend to all men. If we cherish this disposition we shall not withdraw our love from him when his faithfulness to us leads him to wound our straying hearts, or when we discover in him such infirmities as we ourselves possess.

There is a great difference between the commendation of a pastor and the silent appreciation of his labours. Jean Ingelow says, "Love me, and tell me so." It is not enough for the husband and wife to love one another; they are unhappy unless they express, each to the other, the affection they feel. So, too, children need demonstrations of kindness and love from their parents; and if there are any parents who are not cheered and encouraged in their work by the manifest affection of their children, they differ from us. Even as neighbours, our comfort in any community depends largely on the tokens of esteem we receive from others about us. And the pastor has more than the usual need of appreciation expressed in words and deeds. He does not desire to remain in a field where he is useless; and the assurance that he is not labouring in vain may check his impulse to seek another. Dr. Wayland said he probably would not have left Boston had he known before deciding to do so how much his people here loved him; and many pastors have grown restless, and have become engaged to enter new fields of labour under the impression that they were not warmly sustained by their people, when, had they known the real feeling which existed in the hearts to which they ministered, they would not have thought of any change.

Send your pastor some token of your goodwill. No matter how insignificant it may be, it will add to his courage and joy. Do you find in him much to criticise? Shut it back; and for once try commendation of his excellences. Do you love him? Express the love you feel, and your love will increase.

THE HATCHAM TROUBLES.

ST. JAMES'S, Hatcham, and its eccentric and conscientious vicar, have suddenly sprung into notoriety, if not into fame, and divide the attention of the newspapers and the interest of the public in tolerably equal proportions with the Eastern Question. The latest news from the Hatcham vicarage has been conned with an avidity second only to that with which the telegrams from Constantinople have been perused, and the various phases of the controversy have been discussed in leaders almost as numerous as those devoted to the movements of the complicated tangle of Eastern diplomacy. A few weeks ago Hatcham was unknown by name to the vast majority of the multitudes who have recently been debating with such eagerness in railway carriages and omnibuses, in bar-rooms and workshops, and in truth in every place where men do congregate, the rights of the difficult question which its vicar has succeeded in raising. What St. George's-in-the-East was many years ago, and what St. Alban's, Holborn, has been in more recent days, St. James's, Hatcham, is to-day. Neither it nor its clergyman has pre-eminent distinction, but it is for the hour the central point on which the stress of a fierce conflict has converged, and on which of course the eyes of all who are interested in the relations between Church and State in this country are fixed.

Regarding the present fight as only an engagement in a protracted struggle, the issue of which is of vital importance both to the religion and the liberty of this country, it is very instructive—to the friends of Protestantism in the Establishment painfully suggestive—to compare its principal features with those of previous contests. The same forces are in array against each other as were marshalled in the case of St. George's years ago, but the character of the battle has been so entirely changed, that every impartial observer must see that one party has gained very decided successes, which have made it more daring and aggressive. The advanced position occupied by the Ritualists now is alarming to all who believe that their success means a reversal of the policy of the Reformation and a return to the superstition of mediæval times. No doubt it is open to the optimists, who are ready to believe anything rather than admit a point which would tell against the Establishment, to plead that too much importance has been given to mere ceremonial; that there is nothing essentially wrong in processions and banners, vestments and crucifixes, incense and candles, and that it may safely be left to individuals to follow their own judgment and taste in adopting or rejecting them. There are

not a few who talk in this fashion, and who by implication, if not by direct statement, would fix on the Evangelicals the responsibility for the existing troubles, because of the exaggerated view they have taken of these subordinate matters. No argument could be more hollow. The misfortune is that too many weak Evangelicals, deficient either in insight or in resolution, have been affected by it and have sought to meet it by surrender of some points for which they once vigorously contended. Hence the wide difference between the condition of things thirty years ago and to-day. The highest service of the earlier date would be esteemed bald, if not positively low, to-day.

The present and immediate result is seen in the remarkable development of Ritual—all, be it remembered, having a doctrinal purpose and symbolic meaning—witnessed at St. James's, Hatcham, Ritual which is not only far beyond anything which was seen in the most advanced Churches of the primary Tractarian formation, but beyond what was practised in the Church itself under its late High Church vicar, or even under Mr. Tooth himself at the commencement of his incumbency. A very curious correspondence, growing out of a letter signed by Mr. Tooth, but now said to be forged, which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, asserting that the Church was built and supported by High Churchmen for the purpose of enjoying their own peculiarities, presents this point in a very striking light. Mr. Granville, the former vicar, on seeing that letter with Mr. Tooth's name, at once wrote to Mr. Tooth, traversing this statement, and elicited from him a disclaimer of the authorship. Yet on the testimony of the well-known Mr. Thomas Layman, one of the most conspicuous of lay Ritualists, and two others, residents in the district, the church was known in the neighbourhood, even during Mr. Granville's incumbency, as the "High Church at Hatcham," and even then "a surpliced choir, alms bags, processions, decorations, and that extreme and severe High Church book, the 'Hymnal, Noted,' were the marks of 'Romanising tendencies,' and were charged with driving away from their church some of the St. James's parishioners." To all Protestants, even of a very moderate type, these will appear sufficiently distinct marks of High Churchism. But Mr. Tooth has gone so far in advance, that the clergyman who adopted and introduced these Ritualistic peculiarities, says: "Had I known what must follow Mr. Tooth's appointment, his brother should never have become patron of the living. It has been with feelings of inexpressible distress that I have been compelled to see the work of my life, with the many heavy sacrifices it entailed, so perverted and undone through the strange proclivities of my successor." Of course the clergyman who has dared to speak out thus boldly has to pay a penalty, and the champions of Mr. Tooth throw out insinuations as to Mr.

Granville's having reasons for selling the advowson which will not bear the light of day. But these do not at all concern us. The points which are really suggestive and about which there can be no mistake are these: (1) The existence of two different classes of High Church ceremonialists; the one, of whom Mr. Granville is the type, who simply seek for a more ornate service and a few innovations which seem to them "churchy" in their tone, and who are quite content with "usages which, if a little novel at the time in a parish church, have since become very general and acceptable;" and the other, of whom Mr. Tooth is a representative, who are devoted to a sacerdotal and sacramental theory which they desire to express in their Ritual. (2) The immense advantage which the latter class enjoy in virtue of their having a definite faith; and (3) the certainty that they will reap the harvest of the seed which their more cautious friends sow. There can be no doubt that the ground was prepared for Mr. Tooth by the work of his predecessor. Very probably the latter may have been influenced solely or chiefly by æsthetic considerations, but, in the present state of opinions in the Church, æstheticism is a very dangerous tool for anyone to play with who does not desire the advance of Ritualism. To us it is idle nonsense or something worse for a clergyman of the Establishment who has himself adopted not only surplined choirs but the "Hymnal, Noted," to profess a pious horror at the excesses of another who has gone a few steps beyond himself. The adoption of the "Hymnal" is itself surely a strong evidence of sacramentarian sympathies that, even apart from this unfurling of Ritualistic flags, is so likely to encourage the growth of Ritualistic sentiment that no one who resorts to so doubtful an expedient should be surprised if so natural a result follows. It is impossible in a time of war to deprive a flag of its symbolic character, and those of the clergy who fancy they can do so, and can safely use the gewgaws of Ritualism without helping on its cause, will sooner or later discover the mistake they have committed.

It has been Mr. Tooth's aim to give the service of his church as close a resemblance to a Popish Mass as possible. We do not at all accuse or suspect him of any sympathy with Rome. What a number of English Protestants seem unable to understand is, that the men who array themselves in the vestments of the Romish priesthood claim the same prerogatives, inculcate the same doctrines, and observe the same ceremonial (as far as the law will tolerate it), may, nevertheless, renounce the Pope and all his works with an earnestness as real and as devout as that of the most devout Protestant. But it is nevertheless the case, and it is one of the difficulties of the situation. These Anglican priests cannot go to Rome because they do not believe in Rome, that is, they

do not believe in that supremacy of the Papal see and the infallibility of its head, which are of the essence of Romanism. But to the ordinary Englishman this is a very small matter. In his view, masses, confessions, and penances are Romanism, and he fails to comprehend priests who are doing their best to introduce these into the National Church when they indignantly repudiate the charge of Romanism. He is so far right that these Anglican Catholics, while scorning to render allegiance to the Pope, have yet adopted most of the errors which justify the hatred of Popery that is so strong in the minds of true English Protestants.

But the question is not whether the "celebrations" or masses in which Mr. Tooth and his friends delight, are Romish or not; but whether they are in harmony with the law of the Anglican Church. Lord Penzance, in the judgment of last July, pronounced that in some points they were not, and hence all the difficulties which have subsequently arisen. Mr. Tooth's imprisonment, indeed, is only indirectly due to them, and this point, obvious as it may seem to those who are familiar with the bearings of the question, is one on which it is necessary to insist. The punishment which he incurred by his departure from the proper order of the Church, as laid down in the Prayer-Book and Rubrics, was inhibition. If he had promised not to repeat the offence, his first transgression would have been pardoned, and all that the Court did, at last, was to deprive him of the power to continue the practices it pronounced illegal by suspending him from the discharge of his official duties for a short period, which would allow him time for further reflection. When he resolved not to obey, but to resist the decree of the Court, then the whole character of his offence was changed. He became guilty of open resistance to one of the established Courts of the land, and was punished for an act of contumacy which could be tolerated neither in ecclesiastic nor civilian. Of course it is loyalty to conscience which has involved him in these consequences; but it is important to bear in mind the exact point on which the collision has arisen between his conscience and the State. Conscience, no doubt, bids him perform the supposed functions of his priesthood in a manner which the law forbids in its established places of worship. If, then, no mode of reconciliation can be found, the manifest conclusion is that he must cease to officiate as a priest in the buildings of the National Church. He is not even deprived of any mystic power which he may fancy attaches to the priesthood, nor prevented from exercising his office in any Church which is not under the law of the Anglican Establishment.

All that the Court has done is to set forth the conditions to which the law requires all who officiate in the national sanctuaries to conform, and

to insist on their observance. It is, no doubt, a hardship that there should be national buildings from which certain religionists should be excluded, solely because of their opinions ; but this is a hardship which all classes of Nonconformists have endured for centuries, and are enduring to-day. All that Lord Penzance's judgment really did was to place Mr. Tooth on the level of all other Nonconformists. There was no more idea of imprisoning him for *his* dissent than of imprisoning them for *their* dissent, and if this unhappy fate has overtaken him, it is because he offered open and contemptuous resistance to the law ; not in a matter of belief or worship, but in the assertion of his right to officiate in a certain building contrary to an express decision of an authorised Court of the land. Mr. Tooth has taken upon himself to say that one of Her Majesty's Courts, regularly established by the authority of the three estates of the realm, is no Court at all, and has organised positive resistance to it. If such conduct were to be tolerated, there would be an end to all law in the land. Any discontented suitor—say a landlord whose title had been pronounced invalid—might refuse to obey a decree of ejectment, because of some personal objection to the jurisdiction of the Court or the integrity of the judge, and summon his tenants to sustain him in his resistance, and when overpowered and committed to gaol, as he assuredly would be, complain that he was a victim of persecution. The present question seems to be complicated by the fact that the whole dispute has risen out of a difference of religious opinion ; but that does not affect its merits. Mr. Tooth is not asked to change one of his beliefs, or to abandon a single form which he deems necessary in public worship ; but he is required to bow to the authority of the law so long as he claims the privilege and position which the law gives to a clergyman of the National Church. Even if he considers the decision unfair, or the Court by which it has been given unconstitutional, it is for him to appeal to Parliament and so to seek redress for the wrong he has suffered. To suppose that the Court will yield to him and strip itself of the authority which the law has given it because of his objection, is to expect it to connive at the establishment of anarchy in the land. To complain of persecution because it asserts its prerogative and takes the necessary measures to protect itself against an outrage whose impotence, indeed, makes it contemptible, but cannot therefore make it excusable, is really to complain because every man is not allowed to be a law unto himself.

Yet the cry of persecution is very lustily raised. This was to be expected. High Churchmen have got a conception of spiritual freedom which they are very desirous to carry out, and they are oblivious of the necessary conditions to the fulfilment of their hopes. There are wiser men among them who fully understand the difficulties of the problem

they have to solve, and recognise the impossibility of enjoying the kind of liberty for which Ritualists are contending in a State Church. The Bishop of Lincoln admits it, but believes the advantages of the Establishment to be such that the clergy may well consent to some limitations of their freedom in order to retain them. The Rev. T. W. Mossman, whose thoughtful pamphlet is a cheering sign of the growth of true spiritual sentiment, starts from the Bishop's premises, but arrives at a directly opposite conclusion. They agree in acknowledging the principle which the Liberation Society has so long maintained, that where there is State patronage there must be State control. The Bishop thinks the blessing is worth the price that must be paid for it,—the Rector regards the Church's freedom as a precious birthright, which he would not sell for any mess of pottage. Mr. Tooth differs from them both, for he hopes to retain the benefits which the State has conferred, and yet escape the rule it claims to exercise.

So much are we all under the dominion of our own prejudices, that the difficulty of inducing the High Church clergy to acquiesce in conclusions which appear to us so obvious, is perhaps not surprising. Hence we are not much astonished to find a "D.D." writing in the *Daily News*: "Is the *odium theologicum* so desperate among Protestants and Dissenters that they will hound on the persecutor, and approve of physical force in religion, simply because the High Churchman is the only man who can be persecuted for his religion in England now; because of the High Churchmen only can it be said now, in the words of the second lesson of this morning, 'Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake'?" In the case of Nonconformists, the *odium theologicum* has nothing to do with it. We are not so inconsistent as to desire that a sectarian character should be given to a National Church, even though its doctrine and worship might be thus brought into harmony with our private opinions. Persecution by Protestants is as offensive to us as the persecution of Protestants; and could we see that anything of the kind is involved in the present proceedings against Mr. Tooth, we should reprobate them as severely as the Chairman of the "E.C.U.," or Archdeacon Denison himself. We have steadily refused to lend our support to any scheme for converting the Establishment into a mere Evangelical preserve, and have frankly recognised the strength of the position occupied by the Ritualists, when they appeal to the Prayer-Book and contend that they have not departed further from the letter of its requirements than the other parties in the Church. We never admired the Public Worship Regulation Act, nor approved the spirit in which it was passed, and we have always felt that the appointment of Lord Penzance as judge in the new Court was one which High Churchmen might very naturally resent as an indignity. We think we can

understand the present state of indignant feeling, and make every allowance for the illogical reasonings, the passionate declamation and the violent action, into which it is hurrying those who are under its influence.

But there our approval and sympathy must end. We love spiritual independence, and if there were any necessity would gladly lend our aid to any who were struggling to secure it, whatever their theological opinions might be, resenting and resisting any attempt to coerce the Roman Catholic Church as much as any oppression of a Congregationalist community by the law. But there is no difficulty in the way of the independence of the Episcopal Church, except its enjoyment of a privileged position as the National Church, and the one question which its clergy and members have to solve for themselves is, How much is that worth? The Bishop of Lincoln is so perfectly satisfied with the state of things, that, though confessing the existence of some evils, and the desirableness of a greater measure of freedom, he says: "We need not hesitate to prefer our own system of Church government to any other—such, for example, as the Papal, where all authority, human and divine, is subjected to the will of man; or as the Puritan, where, under a professed zeal for the royalties of Christ, all is made subordinate to consistories of human invention; or as the Erastian, where the Divine law is to give way to the human will; or as the modern theory of government, where everything is at the mercy of popular plebiscites." The view is a thoroughly Episcopal one, and is much more likely to commend itself to an excellent divine who surveys the world and the Church from the windows of Riseholme Palace, than to a clergyman in the Hatcham Vicarage, possessed with an idea that he has a mission to regenerate the ritual of the Church, and who finds his wishes thwarted by an iron law. Still it has its value. It shows that even a bishop, who must naturally be desirous to enhance the dignity and authority of the Church in which he is a ruler, insists that the absolute supremacy of the law must be recognised by the clergy. How he would distinguish between pure Erastianism and a system in which the State appoints the chief officers of the Church, and exercises so absolute a control over its doctrines and formularies that not the slightest change can be made without the authority of the Legislature, while any change which that Legislature ordains must be carried out, is a simple puzzle, which we will not attempt to explain. The Bishop seems to have satisfied himself on the point, though probably he may find it hard to satisfy anyone beyond the circle of those to whom it is so pleasant to find that they may yield the State that power which it claims in the Establishment without incurring the reproach of Erastianism, that they will gladly accept the statement on such high Episcopal authority, without being too curious in their inquiries as to

its correctness. But his lordship is unanswerable when he pithily sums up the issue in the following pregnant sentence: "The question is whether we, the bishops and clergy of the Church of England, who have been admitted to our offices and benefices under certain conditions freely accepted by ourselves, are at liberty to violate those conditions, and to claim a right to hold the offices and benefices?"

That is the very point on which Nonconformists would insist. The conditions imposed exclude us who as citizens have just as much claim to the benefits of a national institution—that is, of course, to compete for them as we may compete for the offices in the Civil Service, without any hindrance on the ground of religious opinions—as those by whom they are now monopolised. Our contention is, that the creation by the State of a distinction between different classes of religious people is itself an injustice, and that the injustice is aggravated when those who have voluntarily accepted the terms on which special advantages are offered, are allowed to treat as null and void the conditions on which they hold their privileged position. It is this which Ritualists cannot or will not comprehend. They expect us to sympathise with their aspirations after liberty within the Establishment, and because we do not they say—to use the language of the *Church Times*—that "we have no real desire for our professed object, the liberation of the Church from State control." The fault of the misunderstanding is not with us. Our programme has two articles, distinctly set forth, the "liberation of religion from State *patronage and control*," and we cannot consent to separate them. As to "the stamping out and bag and baggage policy," which, according to the *Church Times*, "Nonconformist literature and the Liberal press have sought to make popular," it has had no countenance from us. Our intense opposition to the aims of the party of which Mr. Tooth is the representative, would certainly lead us to employ every honest and legitimate effort to prevent them from moulding the National Church to their ideal, and were they to succeed in their object, our objection to the Establishment might be intensified; though it is difficult to see how anything could be worse than the state of chaos which at present prevails. But we should resist any perversion of the law so as to make it press unfairly upon any school, and we quietly watch appeals to the courts as spectators who cannot be affected by the triumph of either party, and who are interested only in noting the development of a system to which we are conscientiously opposed. It is a very different thing when either side claims to override the law altogether. When Mr. Tooth breaks the law by lighting his candles or burning his incense, we may feel that he is guilty of no greater offence than, for example, those who neglect to read the Athanasian Creed on the days appointed by the Rubrics, and

that he has some ground to complain of unfairness of treatment. So far we may sympathise with him, and if he and his friends would take the natural course, and demand that the law should be enforced equally all round, they would have reason on their side, and could not easily be resisted. What they do, however, is to trample law under foot altogether. Mr. Tooth is fighting, not against a sentence, but against the Court which has pronounced it. He insists that his Church shall have houses and lands, and titles and powers, which are the inheritance of the National Church, and liberty beside; and this is what we Nonconformists resist, not because we are Protestants, but because we are English citizens.

The only course open to those who want freedom is Disestablishment, and this the Bishop of Lincoln clearly sees. High Churchmen will very naturally be disappointed in him, and we share their feelings. To tell them that there are "flaws and blemishes" which they should seek to remove by peaceable and lawful means, is but cold comfort, and it is not rendered more soothing by the tone in which it is administered. If Dr. Wordsworth could not approve the action of Mr. Tooth, he might at all events have remembered that he was prepared to suffer, and to suffer in behalf of the "Catholic Church." To tell him, and clergymen of his views, that they are not martyrs, but persecutors, "persecuting the Church of which they are ministers by disturbing its peace, and by stirring up strife, and by spreading confusion and anarchy, and by marring its efficacy and imperilling its safety," and then to compare them to Agar and Ishmael, "who complained of persecution, but who persecuted Sarah and Isaac," may be faithful, but it certainly is not soothing. His Lordship is fond of identifying his opponents with obnoxious characters in Scripture history, but he really should confine such parallels to Nonconformists. It is well enough to hold up the man without a wedding garment as a warning to the Society of Friends, and to represent Annas and Sapphira as types of those who object to pay church-rates; but to suggest that good Ritualist clergymen are following in the steps of Agar and Ishmael, is a very different matter. Seriously, the Bishop's letter will not enhance his reputation as a divine, but it shows that underneath all the grandmotherly talk of which he is so fond, there is more knowledge of the world than has generally been suspected. Ritualists are "imperilling the safety" of the Church, that is, of the Establishment, which he confounds with it, and he therefore regards their conduct with disapproval. We expected better things of him. The most Erastian prelate on the Bench could not have taken a more politic course, and advanced arguments more utterly fatal to the idea of Church independence, if the Establishment is to exist. Alas! it would seem as though

he only adds another to the large company, including almost the whole body of Church dignitaries, who will submit to anything rather than allow the Church to be deprived of the supposed benefits of State connection. A recent traveller in California tells us that the climate is so delightful that one of the criminals expatriated by the Vigilance Committee, besought the captain of the vessel which had conveyed them to Panama to turn and take him back to San Francisco. "But," said the captain "they will hang you higher than Haman if I do." "Captain," whined the evil-doer, "I would rather hang in California air than be lord of the soil of another country." The air of the Establishment seems to be as grateful to a large number of excellent men; and so sound High Churchmen will allow the State to lord it over Convocation, and bishops, and clergy; and Evangelicals will tolerate the growth of errors which they are for ever denouncing, and yet take no effectual measure to uproot, because they fear that the Establishment will be imperilled, and lack faith in the power of Christ's Church to survive the overthrow of the human institution which has usurped its name and is mistaken for it.

If we are to trust appearances, the members of the "E. C. U.," at all events, are beginning to wake up to a consciousness of the fact that liberty can only be obtained in a Disestablished Church, and are bracing themselves to face the risks in order to secure the blessings of independence. Sagacious men amongst them must see that the pleas urged on their behalf by themselves and their friends are simply incompatible with the fundamental principles of a National Church. When it is urged that the churchwardens and congregation at Hatcham were satisfied, and that Mr. Tooth ought, therefore, to have been left in peace, we wonder, first, what idea of Episcopalianism can be held by those who start such an argument, and then what possible conception they have got of a National Church. Such reasoning is consistent on the lips of a free Congregationalist, but certainly not on those of an Episcopalian, and a member of a National Church. Mr. Tooth was at Hatcham not as the minister of a promiscuous congregation collected together by admiration of his teaching or his music, or by attachment to his particular views, but as the clergyman of the parish, invested with a legal status, and bound to do a certain work in the manner prescribed by the law. The approval of his congregation means nothing, unless it is proposed that the State Church shall become an establishment of an unauthorised Congregationalism, with a number of bishops and deans added, in order to give a little *éclat*, but on no account to exercise authority.

The elaborate arguments of the Chairman of the "E.C.U." meeting to prove that the Church is entitled to independent power and jurisdiction,

come to nothing. Whether sound or not, they are eminently impractical, and will exercise no influence on a generation which gives little heed to mediæval precedents, and is less disposed than any of its predecessors to brook even the semblance of priestly rule. The man who fancies that one half of the clergy (even supposing them to be so many) will be able to carry their views out in opposition to the rest of their brethren and nine-tenths of the laity, is dreaming wild dreams. We were glad, therefore, to hear the President avow that he was prepared for Disestablishment rather than submission, and to see that his declaration was received with enthusiastic applause by the crowded meeting of the Union. We wait anxiously to see how these pledges will be redeemed. There seems to be no course but disestablishment or submission. The crisis has come when an earnest and vigorous party, full of religious zeal and fervour, finds its path crossed by the unbending will of the State. The State could not yield if it would—would not, if it could. The High Church party is not strong enough to bend it, but it is strong enough to break its ecclesiastical power by disestablishment. The only question is, Is it equal to its opportunity? Or, will it accept some plausible compromise which, while saving its position in the Establishment, will sacrifice the great spiritual object which it professes to hold so dear?

In the meantime Mr. Tooth is in prison, and from the very fact of being there he commands the sympathies of multitudes who hate his doctrines and regard his designs with distrust and alarm. There is an unpleasant idea that he is suffering for fidelity to conscience, and that he is the victim of religious persecution. The impression is deepened by the hard tone which some journals have adopted towards him, and by the unfortunate prison rules, which inflict upon him indignities to which an offender like Colonel Baker was not subjected. The authority of law must be maintained; but will not Mr. Tooth's imprisonment convince those who before have been unconvinced, that the attempt to regulate religious faith and practice by law is certain to end in injustice?



ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

“SWEET are the uses of adversity.” The troubles into which the Public Worship Regulation Act has plunged the whole body of Ritualists are already beginning to have a salutary influence in opening their eyes to truths to which, hitherto, they have been utterly blind. The columns of the *Church Times* for the last two or three weeks have been crowded with articles and letters expressing the most advanced

views in relation to Disestablishment, and showing that the writers are prepared to give them practical effect. Mr. W. Hugh Montgomery, one of its correspondents, has learned that it is to "the policy of forbearance" of the "great mass of Nonconformists" that the continued existence of the Establishment is now due—an admission which we commend to the careful reflection of those among our friends, happily a rapidly decreasing minority, who are disposed on the one hand to depreciate Nonconformist influence, and on the other to evade the sense of Nonconformist responsibility. This writer, however, is not content to trust to the action of Nonconformists. He is hoping for a rapid conversion of Churchmen; to see them "in a year or two as much opposed to the paraphernalia of Establishment (such, for instance, as bishops in the House of Lords) as they are now opposed to the maintenance of the sacred crocodiles of Oriental superstition by our Government. Indian and Colonial bishops are subsidised on pretty much the same terms as their brother officials the alligators; and it is no use for Churchmen to protest against grants made towards the repair of the tottering temples of the false prophet, when they are content to draw upon the State for the support of ecclesiastical establishments abroad, where the State revenues are derived from aggrieved Moslems, Brahmins, and Buddhists." It is quite possible that a gentleman who lays down such admirable principles needs a little further instruction as to their proper application in this country, so as to see that the case of English Nonconformists who protest against the appropriation of a national estate, in whose benefits all ought to be sharers, to sectarian purposes, is just as strong as that of the Moslems, Brahmins, and Buddhists against their being taxed for the support of a religious teaching which they hate. This is the point on which many need to be enlightened at present. It is evident, however, that the most clear-headed of the Ritualists see that Disestablishment must carry Disendowment, and that they are preparing themselves for it. "No doubt (says Rev. Alfred Ellerton) the Church would be mulcted of a vast portion of her property; but, as has been pointed out in your columns, she would still be left the most powerful and influential religious body in the country."

To the wild declamation of the hour but little attention is to be paid. What is encouraging to those who for years have been prophesying in the wilderness, is to find that their words have not been lost, and that earnest men in the Episcopal Church are beginning to see that the Establishment is at least not an unmixed blessing, and that such aid as it gives may be too dearly purchased. Nor is this change of sentiment found on one side only. There are Evangelicals, of whom the *Rock* is the representative, who are beginning to realise the hopelessness of their position, and to understand the impossibility of

purging the Establishment of the Romanising leaven which is corrupting it. If so small a matter as the Public Worship Regulation Act has created such a commotion, they can hardly persuade themselves into a belief that the sweeping changes are attainable which they know to be necessary, and those who prefer Protestantism to the Establishment are trying to reconcile themselves to part with the latter. If it be once established that Ritualism cannot be put down, the conversion to Free Church views will be rapid among the best of the Evangelical clergymen. With the Ritualists the difficulties are of another character, but we have dealt fully with them elsewhere. They have fancied it possible to wear Cæsar's livery, and refuse Cæsar's control; but the hard teaching of events is showing them their error. It is satisfactory to find how soon some of the difficulties in the way of freedom disappear as soon as they are fairly grappled with. When Nonconformists had to be met, they were presented as insuperable: they are now contemplated in a different spirit, and with an entirely different result. The *Literary Churchman* has an editor, we are told, of "staunch State and Church views," yet it has had an article in a recent number pointing out the insignificance of the rural work of the Church, which alone would be injured by Disestablishment, as compared with its work in large towns and cities, which would be profited by it, inasmuch as the best men would then be drawn to the towns, to the benefit both of these urban populations and of the clergy. On this the *Church Times* remarks: "We do not, however, think the injurious effects of Disestablishment upon rural districts would be half as great as is generally assumed; for where the squire was a good man he would practically refound the parish church, and where "he was not, the place could be far better cared for by diocesan missionaries entirely independent of him, than by one of the 'Church's hard bargains' in a family living."

The passionate indignation with which a large number of Churchmen, including Evangelicals as well as Ritualists, assail their bishops, is only equalled by the intensity of their desire for an increase of the number. The present Ministry seem resolved to gratify the latter feeling to the utmost possible extent. In addition to the two new sees already created we are threatened, or promised (as we may regard it), with no less than four more, and even this does not content some ardent lovers of the Episcopate, who are still crying out for more, and hope to persuade the Ministry to advance one step further. Probably there is an idea among Churchmen that the increase of the hierarchy will have an effect on weak-kneed Dissenters, and we might therefore reasonably object to the forging of new instruments for the extinction of Dissent by

the Legislature. But there is another side to the question. Not to say that the loss of men who would be caught by such means need not cause us much distress, it may be doubted whether the political effect of having two classes of bishops, one sitting in Parliament and the other excluded from it, will be good, judged from a Conservative point of view. Indeed this multiplication of non-Parliamentary bishops looks very much like preparing for the inevitable. In the meantime, if Episcopalians really feel that more bishops are necessary for the fuller working out of their system, it is a pity that they can only have them after Parliamentary discussion and possibly by means of Parliamentary dodging, such as that to which recourse has been had in the case of some of these Episcopal Bills in previous Sessions.

By a very curious coincidence, the month which has seen a clergyman committed to gaol for contempt of a Court which had suspended him from his office for excess of Ritual, has witnessed also the establishment of daily communion—some would describe it as the revival of the Mass—in St. Paul's Cathedral. Without going so far as to apply to this service a name meant to be opprobrious, we cannot hesitate to regard this as the most daring defiance of the Protestant feeling of the country on which advanced High Churchmen have ventured, and it is all the more significant because of the time at which this Ritualistic innovation has been introduced. It may be asked, indeed, why the Lord's Supper should not be observed every day? But, remembering the position which the Eucharist occupies in the Anglican system, the mystical efficacy ascribed to it, the superstitions with which it is sought to surround it, and its relation to the whole theory of sacerdotal claims, we cannot afford to treat the subject in so easy a manner. The changes which have been effected in St. Paul's under the influence of the Dean and two prominent members of the Chapter, have been a source of anxiety to the earnest Protestants in the Establishment. The whole appearance of the altar and the character of the service have been transformed. The two Canons referred to—with a contempt of the Court, which in essence was the same as that for which Mr. Tooth is suffering imprisonment—openly announced their intention not to obey the Purchas judgment in relation to the Eastward position, and, we believe, have adhered to their determination. And now another step is taken. Nothing which has occurred at Hatcham can have the significance of these proceedings at St. Paul's. The symbolic teaching is the same in both cases; if it has taken more extravagant form at the little suburban church, we must remember that even moderate novelties at the cathedral tell for far more than the gravest excesses in the church, just as the example of the two defiant Canons has a far graver aspect and more

wide-spread influence than that of Mr. Tooth. As if, too, to tell this gentleman and his friends that they need not despair, the Bishop of London has been consecrating a new shrine of Ritualistic worship, the Church of St. Agnes, Kennington, whose Vicar is reported to have asked the prayers of the faithful for Mr. Tooth, and yet asserts that the Bishop knows the character of the Ritual he means to observe. While these things occur, no one can believe that the authorities of the Church really desire to repress the evil. The *Church Times* wonders that Mr. Dover should be willing to have his church consecrated, and in characteristic style says that in the present state of things it would not put a pig-sty under the State. But Protestants will wonder rather what could have induced the Bishop of London to help to multiply the agencies of a school against whose tendencies he has so often protested.

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

The Preachers' Annual for 1877. Edited by R. A. BERTRAM. London: Richard D. Dickinson. (Price 6s.)

If we are not greatly mistaken, this is the volume of *The Study and the Pulpit* for 1876, but we are not quite sure. Any how, it is a capital volume, though containing some things, of course, with which we do not agree. Besides a large variety of miscellaneous matter interesting to preachers, there are Dr. Taylor's Lectures on Preaching, recently delivered at Yale, Mr. Withrow's interesting account of the Catacombs, and a series of papers by Dr. Samuel Bartlett against the doctrine of "Annihilation."

Gabrielle Vaughan. By M. E. SHIPLEY. London: Seeley & Co. (Price 5s.)

KINGSLEY's lines, "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever; do noble things, not dream them, all day long," are the motto on the title-page of this volume; and all the story rings true to its key-note. Gabrielle Vaughan's mother, fearing lest a romantic imagination and artistic tastes should lead her child astray, by blunting her sense of duty, and by incapacitating her for practical work, endeavoured to counteract the inclinations of her nature, and to turn her talents into another channel. For a long time these efforts were continued, but Gabrielle's

patience and unfailing good temper under this somewhat trying discipline at last won the day, and set her free to follow out the natural bent of her mind. Power and genius had been repressed, but not extinguished, and Gabrielle had only gained increased strength and freshness from her experience. But new and severer trials were in store for her, and with a noble unselfishness she put aside possibilities of great happiness for the sake of her mother and her family. However, all comes right in the end. Love returns when it need no longer be refused. All distrust and misunderstandings pass away, and Gabrielle is left successful in art and rich in affection, having shown herself "good" as well as "clever," and with the power to "dream" as well as to "do noble things." The book should be a favourite with girls; and we fancy that boys—who do read their sisters' books sometimes, and exchange "Tom Brown" for "Little Women"—would not find parts of the story amiss.

The White Cross and Dove of Pearls. By the Authoress of *Selina's Story*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price 9s.)

WE do not find the elements of religion and sensationalism less discordant in this novel than in other novels written with a similar design; but for the genus "religious

novel" we confess we have no liking. The religion is, with the rarest exceptions, made too obvious: the light is not allowed to shine, it is flashed in your face. Broadly speaking, we prefer the religion without the novel, and the novel without the religion—*i.e.* as the religion is usually "laid on;" for it does not follow that a novel without the religious varnish should be an irreligious novel. To our prejudiced eyes religious fiction usually has the air of fictitious religion.

The plot—if it may be called a plot—in the book now before us, turns on the fortunes of a child who has been stolen by gipsies, and proves eventually to be of high birth. The characters are mere lay figures on which the religious drapery is hung—drapery in season and out of season. Nor do we find a redeeming point in grammatical accuracy. Such expressions as the following require a little attention: "Not that she *liked* for *Rayner* associating with such a child." "Which might make her *sought* to in many a time of need as *friend* indeed."

In saying good-bye we would commend to our authoress a comparison of Col. ii. 16, with the following passage: "It would be hard if anything should occur to create unhappiness between you and your papa; and yet, if he were to tell you on the Sabbath to play chess with him, or to perform a secular piece of music, I should know then what you ought to do, and should say, 'Resist his will to the death,' because it is written, 'Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.'" The sentence which follows: "But there being no command having *direct reference* to the stage, I don't know what to tell you," reminds us of the parish clergyman who would not reprove bribery because he did not find it forbidden in the Bible. The authoress, who we suppose, does not disapprove of the teaching given above, must be one of that vast majority which prefers *rules* to *principles*, because it cannot or will not give itself the intellectual trouble of working out principles to their conclusion and adapting them to the varying needs of common life. We wonder what she would make of that *principle* of generosity,

"Give to every man that asketh of thee"?

The Right of Episcopalians to the National Religious Endowments. By A LOUGHBOROUGH LIBERAL. London: E. Marlborough & Co. (Price 4d.)

A capital pamphlet.

Nothing but Leaves. By SARAH DOUDNEY. London: Hodder and Stoughton. (Price).

A PLEASANTLY-WRITTEN story, conveying very wholesome lessons.

Christianity and Morality: the Boyle Lecture for 1874 and 1875. By HENRY WACE, M.A. Second edition, revised. London: Pickering. (Price 6s.)

WHEN Mr. Wace's lectures first appeared we noticed them in the CONGREGATIONALIST at some length, and we see no reason for modifying the judgment which we then expressed. Mr. Wace seems to us to have made by far the most important and valuable contribution to English theological literature that has been made for many years. His book is one which should be absorbed into the very substance and life of one's theological thought. We are glad to see that it has reached a second edition so soon, and trust that in its cheaper form it will have a large and rapid circulation.

Pennel for 1876. London: F. E. Langley. (Price 2s. 6d.)

OUR readers will know what to find in *Pennel* when we say that it is a magazine intended to advocate what is known as "Scriptural Holiness." Many well-known representatives of the "Higher Life" doctrine are among its contributors.

The Lay Preacher for 1876. London: F. E. Langley. (Price 3s. 6d.)

THIS magazine is edited with care and ingenuity. There are papers on great theological doctrines, innumerable outlines of sermons, and a large number of "Pulpit Illustrations." Of course, the literary quality of the articles is not high; but they seem to be of a kind which the readers of the magazine are likely to want.

THE TRAIT SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS.

THE volume of *The Sunday at Home* (Price 7s.) for 1876 contains reading enough to fill up all the Sunday afternoons and evenings for 1877, in a lone farmhouse or an invalid's chamber. Mr. Paxton Hood has given a series of sketches of Welsh preachers. There are stories by Mrs. Prosser and Mrs. Whitehead; Biographies, Sermons, Poems, Scripture Enigmas, Pages for the Young, and Portions for the Sick-room. The engravings are as abundant as ever. *The Leisure Hour* for 1876 (Price 7s.) contains papers on Arctic Expeditions, on Early Civilisation, Natural History Anecdotes, a Tale of the American War of Independence, by Frances Browne; another tale called, "The Shadow on the Hearth;" Biographical Sketches; a Trip to Palmyra and the Desert, by the Rev. William Wright, late of Damascus; and a number of miscellaneous articles too numerous to be even named. Eight hundred and forty-four pages covered with excellent writing and interesting engravings are cheap at seven shillings.

The Sisters of Glencoe. By EVA WYNN. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price 5s.)

"SAVE me from my friends" may be fairly exclaimed by all friends of the Temperance movement on reading such a volume as this. If Temperance meetings were as dull, or its advocates such prigs, as the specimens given us in this tale would lead us to believe, the cause would be in very evil plight. Yet, on the whole, the book is not worse than most others written from a special standpoint to support one idea.

Walter's Mistake. By Mrs. H. B. PAULL. London: Sunday-School Union. (Price 1s. 6d.)

"ONE thing at a time" is the motto and the central idea of Mrs. Paull's tale. Walter, through never fixing his mind on his immediate duty and work, gets into trouble at school and at home, fails in his studies, and brings disappointment on himself. At last a mistake of the gravest kind, by which a friend's life is endangered,

brings him to his senses. He is cured of his inattention, and returns to work with a firm resolve to avoid a repetition of the failures of the past. The story is natural, and not too goody. The weak point of the book is its illustrations.

Peep-Show for 1876. London: Strahan & Co. (Price 3s.)

HAPPY children! A magazine like this makes one wish that one were six years old again. There is a purity and a brightness about it which makes it an ideal children's book. We have not counted the pictures, but the title-page tells us that there are three hundred. There are some mild doses of science, scraps of history and legend, a few very simple essays on elementary moral questions, and pages upon pages of amusing, fanciful stories. The English is excellent.

Songs from the Woodlands. By BENJAMIN GOUGH. London: S. W. Partridge & Co.

THIS volume is a collection of poems by the author of "Kentish Lyrics," and the "Lyra Sabbatica." The verses are for the most part pretty and pleasing, and though the strain never becomes lofty, the subjects chosen are such as best suit the powers of the writer. Such verses as "The Trout Stream," and "The Tit Family," would charm any bright child. It would not be hard to point out flaws in thought and in expression; but to apply severe criticism to a volume like this would, for many reasons, be ungracious.

Scamp and I. By L. T. MEADE. London: J. F. Shaw and Co. (Price 3s. 6d.)

A NEW book on an old subject—the waifs and strays of the London slums. The first few chapters were unpromising, but as the story went on, interest deepened, and the book was not laid down till the very last page was reached. The history of these three children and of their faithful dog is most touching, though very sad. We can heartily recommend the book to Sunday-school workers who want a story to tell to a class after lesson hour.

The Congregationalist.

MARCH, 1877.

DR. ROBERT VAUGHAN.

CONSIDERING the great work which Dr. Robert Vaughan did for Congregationalism, and the prominent place which he occupied in its public assemblies for many years, it is surprising that he should have passed away comparatively unnoticed. A monument in the cemetery at Torquay, where he spent the last few months of his life, testifies to the reverent affection with which his memory was cherished by a number of personal friends, and a life-like portrait in Lancashire College, of which he was the first President, recalls the recollection of his noble and impressive aspect, and shows that he is not forgotten there, where some of his best work was done. But there is no memorial, so far as we are aware, of a more public nature to keep alive the name and work of a leader who exerted as powerful an influence in moulding the character of Congregationalism as any man of his day, than whom no one did more to make it a power in society at large, and who certainly had the most extensive reputation of any Dissenting minister in these outside circles. The only biography which we have of one whose life had much more of variety and incident than falls to the ordinary lot of Dissenting ministers is a brief sketch, done indeed with a loving hand and worthy of commendation, but too short to do full justice to its theme. Already his name is becoming little more than a tradition among us. A generation has risen up which knows little or nothing of him. Among the elder men who were his immediate juniors, and who have a vivid recollection of his spirit-stirring eloquence, there are occasional references to some of his grand oratorical achievements, or the grave and judicious counsels in which heroic courage was so happily

tempered with a keen sagacity that marked him out as a true leader, but he can hardly be said to have left behind him an impression at all equal to his reputation, or to the influence which once he wielded.

Special circumstances partly account for this. He had retired from active public work for many years before his death, and even the religious world comes very soon to forget those whose service belongs to the past. When occasion demanded, indeed, he was ready, even to the end (for his advancing age had brought with it few signs of declining vigour), to obey the call of the denomination he ever served so faithfully, and to do valiant service for those principles of which he was so stalwart a champion. But the early abandonment of his important official position had doomed him to comparative obscurity and isolation. The old ties were severed, and it was not possible to form new ones. Indeed, his pastorate at Torquay, accepted after some years of devotion to purely literary work, was itself a retirement, in which he probably would have been extremely useful, but which withdrew him to a large extent from the public eye. Had he died while still President of Lancashire College, or had his retirement in a good old age immediately preceded his decease, the event would have produced a stronger impression upon the Churches. But years had elapsed since he had left Manchester, and the period was quite long enough to produce a great change of feeling, if only as the result of the change in the *personnel* of Lancashire Congregationalism. In Kensington, where he had made a high and, at that time, a unique reputation, an entirely new generation had risen up. There was thus lacking that body of fellow workers, such as the members of a large Church, or an influential committee of an institution which had long enjoyed the benefit of his services, to form the nucleus round which the wider sympathy of Congregational Churches or of Evangelical Christendom might have gathered. For nearly ten years Dr. Vaughan had been principally a literary worker, and doing a service which, however valuable, was not likely to be popular. This itself may serve to explain the strange fact that perhaps the death of none of our public men attracted so little notice. When we think how Liverpool was stirred by the death of Raffles, and Birmingham by that of James, Bristol by that of David Thomas, and London by that of Binney, it causes a loving admirer of Robert Vaughan a transient feeling of sadness to remember how soon and how quietly the waters of oblivion seemed to close over one who, in his own sphere, had done a work which in its own order was as worthy of commemoration even as theirs.

But the circumstances do not wholly explain the phenomenon. Something was due to the character of the man. Robert Vaughan stood to a very large extent alone, identified closely neither with the old school nor

the new, rather the representative of a transition period. He was too independent to become the slavish adherent of any party, and too courageous to shrink from the avowal of any conviction he had formed ; and as his opinions were distinctly his own, the result of his own reading and reflection, formed without regard to the demands of orthodoxy, and yet with a jealous care for the truth of God, they often exposed him to misunderstanding, and left him with but few sympathisers. It was the same with his ecclesiastical and political position. He was neither with the Claytons of the former generation, nor even with the more advanced men of the same school, who were his contemporaries, nor yet with Mr. Miall and his associates, the representatives of the young and vigorous party which, in his later days, was rising into importance. He was of a class, numerous enough among men of culture and refinement, men well described by Henry Holbeach as Cavaliers in sympathy and Roundheads in principle. On both sides he was strongly developed. His love of art ; his scorn of all that was vulgar and mean ; his high appreciation of learning and taste ; his historic spirit and keen susceptibility to all that was noble in the traditions of our country, would have made him a Cavalier. But never was Roundhead more intense in his hatred of tyranny, more bold in the maintenance of individual rights, more earnest in his championship of freedom. It is the misfortune of men of this stamp that they inspire little personal enthusiasm. They are admired and honoured, but they fail to awaken the chivalrous loyalty which is enkindled by those who make a cause—whether it be that of the past or the future—their own, and are prepared to stand or fall by it. They are happy, indeed, if they do not lay themselves open to suspicion from both sides. At times, especially during the Education controversy, Dr. Vaughan did not wholly escape this ; but it was only in the heat of the battle that anyone could venture to suggest a doubt as to the loyalty of one of the purest and bravest spirits which Congregationalism had in its ranks. But he had no great personal following. Multitudes appreciated his philosophic breadth, his unswerving fidelity to what he held to be right, his magnanimous resistance to the majority if he believed it to be wrong, his manly bearing, and his eloquent speech ; but he did not lay the foundation of a school, though unconsciously he did much to prepare the way for the advances which have since been made, and contributed more to the formation of the opinions of the new generation than they themselves would be content to allow, or, indeed, are able to perceive.

It is instructive to mark some of the movements with which Dr. Vaughan was associated, and on which he has left a mark more or less distinct. Though holding fast by the Evangelical creed, it would not be unfair to regard him as one of the earliest representatives of a more

liberal Dissent. One of his favourite authors was John Foster, and to none of his productions did he attach a higher value than to the essay on the aversion of men of taste for Evangelical religion. He sought himself to guard against the faults there exposed, and both in the matter and manner of his teaching so to present the Gospel as to secure the assent of the thoughtful and the sympathy of the more refined. His departures from the doctrine of the old school would be esteemed very trivial now-a-days, but at the time they were regarded with no little suspicion in the minds of many. His steps, though cautious, were all in the direction in which modern thought has since more decidedly advanced. He would probably have called himself a Calvinist, but his Calvinism was of a very modified character, and his leanings to the more moderate views of Richard Baxter. Were he among us to-day he would be esteemed a theological Conservative, but in his own time he was a Liberal, and sound and rational Liberalism owed much to him. We do not suggest that he exercised the same influence on theological thought as others whom it would be easy to name; nor do we forget that he contended strenuously against certain developments of Broad Church doctrines, in which he saw peril to the fundamental principles of the Gospel. But he did much to break the fetters of the traditionalism by which Evangelical Dissenters had been bound, and, by inculcating a broader view of humanity and deprecating the exaggerated representations of its depravity, which had long been current, anticipated some of the best features in the teaching of our own times. He had no pretensions to be regarded as a leader of theological thought, or indeed in any true sense as a scientific theologian; and for this very reason it is possible to overlook the real power which he exercised in aiding the emancipation of our Churches from servile bondage to a system in which some of the best features of Evangelicalism had been caricatured.

It will perhaps surprise many to be told that Dr. Vaughan was a distinguished political Dissenter, one of the first among our leading ministers who belonged to that much maligned class. Any surprise which may be felt, however, is due to the remarkable manner in which that greatly-abused name is applied. The term, in the mouth of those who use it to point their opprobrious attacks, is meant to designate a Dissenter who is contending for religious equality, even to the extent of overthrowing the Established Church. If he abstain from such sacrilegious attempts, and above all if he will maintain Conservative principles, he may take what part he pleases in public life, speak on the questions of the hour as freely as any political Churchman, be active and zealous in the interests of the party to which he attaches himself, and he will run no risk of being pointed out as a political Dissenter. Resistance to the ascendancy of a sect is political Dissent, and the

Liberationist who organises it is the true political Dissenter. In that sense the title cannot be given to Dr. Vaughan. He was a typical representative of the most advanced ecclesiastical politics of the past generation, but he did not, at all events until the last year or two of his life, reach the level of the present one. This development of opinion in an old man, due partly to the Bicentenary controversy, and partly to the growth of Ritualism and Rationalism—and especially the former—in the Establishment, was remarkable. It is all but certain that had his life been spared he would have identified himself with the Liberation Society, his sentiments towards which had undergone a marked change. But at the beginning of the movement which Mr. Miall inaugurated, in the face not only of coldness, but of positive hostility from the Dissenting leaders of the party, who, while they held his principles, were not prepared to take aggressive action against the Establishment, he regarded it with distrust and dislike. He was one of the few men who are more radical in old age than in earlier times; but the change came too late for him to take any active part in the anti-State Church agitation. Not the less, however, was he a political Dissenter. In all great questions which interested his mind and stirred the generous sentiments of his noble heart, he never hesitated to come to the front. An ardent love of freedom, and a sincere devotion to the work of popular education, inspired by his own intense craving for knowledge and belief in its power, were the mainspring of such political earnestness as he manifested. Its displays were reserved for critical occasions, and they were always those in which the interests that lay near to his heart were involved. No English heart was roused to more righteous indignation by the arrogance and injustice of the Czar Nicholas, and none felt more strongly than he did the duty of England to check the growth of a power which was so menacing to the freedom of Europe and of the world. He felt it all the more because of his glowing sympathy with Kossuth and his Hungarian compatriots, whose wrongs did so much to rouse that national resentment against Russia, which perhaps more than any other cause prepared this country for the Crimean war. Dr. Vaughan's speech at the glorious welcome which Manchester gave to Kossuth was one of the incidents of the day. Walter Savage Landor in one of his Imaginary Conversations, makes the Czar refer to it in these terms: "Unaccustomed as I am to be moved or concerned by the dull thumps of honourable gentlemen in the English Parliament, and very accustomed to be amused by the sophisms and trickeries, evolutions and revolutions, pliant antics and pliant oaths of the French tribune, I perused with astonishment the vigorous oration of this Dr. Vaughan. I did not imagine that any Englishman now living could exert such a force of eloquence." Of the characteristics of his stirring eloquence

we shall speak afterwards. Here we note only how he threw his whole soul into the cause of human freedom, and in virtue of his intensity of conviction and depth of feeling, pleaded for it with a power which extorted the admiration of some who do not ordinarily pass compliments on the speeches of Dissenting ministers. It was the contrast between the living force of a man whose burning words only reflected the passionate sentiments of his heart, and the more formal utterances of those who, whatever their rhetorical skill, were not thus deeply moved, that arrested the attention of Mr. Landor; and as it was with Dr. Vaughan in this particular case, so was it everywhere. On the Maynooth Bill, where his antagonism to the arch foe of all freedom and progress was called forth; on the Education question, where he felt that the real good of the people was being sacrificed to sectarian wrangles; even in his action on the American question, where, in his view, the rights of the separate States were being unfairly sacrificed, and where even those who may have differed from him could never suppose him unfaithful to the principles of freedom,—he showed the same courage and power in the defence of his own conscientious convictions.

To take this public action was a different thing in his time from what it is to-day. Even now the influence of the old notions as to the restrictions under which the Christian, and especially the Christian minister, should place himself, is not wholly lost. But it was much more powerful thirty or twenty years ago. How this theory of the relation of Christians to public life grew up among Dissenters it is not easy to say. Perhaps it is one of the products of an age of weakness, when Nonconformists were so satisfied with the amount of liberty which they had at length been able to secure, that they thought it expedient not to arouse the jealousy of their enemies, by too open an assertion of their rights. Certain it is that our Puritan fathers must not be held responsible for so gross a misconception of Christian duty. They, at all events, could not be accused of ignoring the duties of the citizen, or of teaching their people to regard patriotism as a secular feeling. Dr. Vaughan came much nearer the idea of the old Puritan when he insisted on carrying religion into the sphere of common everyday life, and infusing its spirit into his politics, as into everything else. The course of events has, in one remarkable case at least, justified his political sagacity. But the practical assertion of the duty of the Christian minister to raise his voice and make his power felt on all great national questions is of far greater value than any contribution which he made (effective and influential as many of his utterances were) to the formation of public opinion on the points at issue. It was a protest against the alienation of the greater portion of human thought and conduct from the control of religion altogether. It was in effect a proclamation

of the old truth which Peter learned in the vision, which prepared him for preaching the Gospel to the Gentile Cornelius, that God had made nothing common or unclean, in opposition to the Manichæan notion which has too long been dominant in the Church. There are numbers who are glad enough to adopt and act upon this view in relation to personal indulgences and luxuries, but who shrink from carrying it out when it would constrain them to the discharge of an unpopular duty ; and while they would tear down the barriers which shut out the Christian from the ball-room or the theatre, would rigidly maintain those which exclude him from the political arena. Dr. Vaughan pursued a different course, and did it when it required no little resolution and firmness to take such a position. The ministers of his generation, especially the leaders, eschewed political action. They were generally Whigs, and as staunch supporters of that school as could be found in the country. But their support was, for the most part, given in private rather than by any public action, except, indeed, when an occasion seemed sufficiently important for some united demonstration, conducted with a due regard to ministerial decorum and conventional propriety. A minister like Dr. Vaughan appearing as a political orator was a novelty ; it is so no longer. Something is due to the courage of such a man as well as to the advance of public opinion. Religion and politics are both gainers by the change, It is easy for a monkish sentimentalism to complain that the tone of spiritual life is thus lowered, but the mistake is due to a false conception of what spirituality is, and the consequent narrowing of the sphere of Christian law in such a way as to expose it to the contempt of its enemies. On the other hand, we have had enough and more than enough, lately of complaint from a certain class, that the philanthropist and sentimentalist have intruded themselves into the domain of practical politics. What friend of right and humanity does not rejoice that it has been so ? In truth, this fresh breath of thought and feeling which has not been corrupted by the atmosphere of diplomacy, is ever needed to purify the political atmosphere. There will always be sufficient counteractive influence to hold in check the humanitarian tendency which political cynics, who would palm themselves off on the world as statesmen, hold in such fear and detestation. The only danger is lest these better influences should not have their legitimate weight, as assuredly they will not if the voices of those who can plead most powerfully in their favour are to be silenced on religious grounds.

Dr. Vaughan identified himself so thoroughly with literary movements and was so desirous especially of securing higher intellectual culture for the Dissenting ministry, that it was generally supposed that he was a distinguished scholar himself. But this he certainly was not. His

great mental vigour enabled him to discuss theological or even literary subjects with a freedom and force which many who had a far better claim to be described as scholars could not rival, and he was thus entitled to take a far higher rank in any intellectual aristocracy than that to which they could aspire. The truth is, he never had the opportunity of regular scholastic discipline, not even of so much as the Dissenting academy of his early years would have afforded. What he was he became in virtue of native force, of a thirst for knowledge which developed itself in his boyhood, and which was never abated, and of an untiring application which was hardly relaxed even in his old age. What an active and powerful brain and incessant diligence could do to overcome the disadvantages arising from want of early training, was done. But everyone knows that it cannot supply deficiencies in the minutiae of scholarship. Hence when Dr. Vaughan published his work on the "Revolutions of English History," an Edinburgh Reviewer was able to point out a number of inaccuracies, over which he made merry and for which he sought to cover the author with ridicule. Such a mode of proceeding was neither generous nor fair. The Reviewer himself is a man of no mean parts, but in everything except accuracy of scholarship Dr. Vaughan could safely have challenged comparison with him, and would have been generally acknowledged (not to put it too strongly) to be at least his equal in intellectual calibre. But the one had passed through a very different training from the other. The discipline of the university, brought to bear upon an acute and vigorous mind, and one finding a special pleasure in original investigation, had developed in the Reviewer habits of minute accuracy, which were not less valuable than the vast stores of learning which he had acquired. It was not wonderful, therefore, that he was able to convict Dr. Vaughan of many blunders. Indeed there are very few scholars in whose work the same keen eye would not detect a multitude of flaws. Perhaps it was natural that he should use the critic's scalpel with unsparing firmness, and yet there was a savagery in the method of the operation which might well have been spared. All who knew Dr. Vaughan intimately knew well that he never pretended to finished scholarship. Remembering to how large an extent he was self-taught, the wonder is that his attainments were so great. No one who heard his public addresses, or who met him in society, would have suspected his deficiencies. He had not only the air and manners of a man of high culture, but he had a large stock of varied information on which he could draw. His talk was always that of a well-read, thoughtful, polished scholar, of philosophical temper and tendency. It was only when he was brought face to face with questions such as are put in college examinations, and which can only be thoroughly dealt with by those who have had the benefits of collegiate

exercises, that any weakness could be detected. Had he been placed in favourable circumstances he would have been a great scholar. As it was he was a much greater man, even intellectually, than a large number—perhaps the majority—of those who pride themselves on their scholarship.

He was but little known even to our own Churches until his success at Kensington in attracting a number of hearers belonging to a class very seldom found in Dissenting chapels even now, obtained for him a reputation. But even in his first pastorate at Worcester he had made a strong impression, the effect of which is not wholly forgotten even at this distant day. The story of the Worcester Church is at once an encouragement and a warning to Congregationalists. Situated in a cathedral city, and amidst a population not predisposed to Dissent, it has, nevertheless, for a long series of years maintained an honourable and influential position. One of the chief reasons is that it has had an unbroken succession of able, earnest, and godly men as pastors. Dr. Redford was Dr. Vaughan's immediate successor, while the latest member of this goodly company was his own nephew, who is just leaving the city where his uncle commenced his distinguished course, to enter on a wider sphere of labour. We can only trust that Worcester may soon find another pastor of kindred spirit to continue the work to which in his day Dr. Vaughan gave so powerful an impulse.

Kensington, however, was a sphere in which he found work that probably was more congenial, and certainly was more calculated to call forth his highest powers. He could not then or at any other period be fairly called a popular preacher, and to ordinary congregations was always disappointing; but he seldom failed to produce an impression upon more thoughtful hearers, and this power soon began to be felt in the aristocratic suburb of the west. It is not necessary to tell here how the Duchess of Sutherland, then the intimate friend of our youthful Queen, became interested, and was in the habit not only of attending the plain Dissenting chapel herself, but of bringing with her a number of her aristocratic friends, many of whom were equally moved by a style of teaching so different from that to which they were accustomed from the pulpits of their own Church. Nor was it only as a preacher that Dr. Vaughan's power was felt. He took a deep interest in the work of the London University, and was chosen to occupy the chair of Modern History—a position which he filled for many years, and which secured him a considerable measure of literary reputation. His little books on "Congregationalism" and the "Modern Pulpit" helped further to extend his influence among the Congregational Churches, the more earnest and cultured of whose members felt that they were the productions of a man who had taken a truer and broader view of the relations of Congre-

gationalism and its teachers, to the changed conditions of society which were beginning to develop themselves, than most of his contemporaries. It was to this class that he appealed, and their confidence, which he early won, was never afterwards lost.

The opening of the new College at Manchester appeared to afford a fitting opportunity for utilising his gifts and reputation to the highest advantage, and he was elected its first President. This position he held for about fourteen years, not without some anxieties and difficulties, but with credit to himself and advantage to the College. It would have been more fortunate for himself, perhaps, if the work of the theological chair had not been attached to the Presidency. If our present collegiate system is to continue, one of the probable reforms of the future will be the release of the head of each institution from professorial duties; but this is not likely to be done until, by a process of amalgamation, we have reduced the number while increasing the size and importance of our colleges, or theological halls, as we hope yet to see them become. But the very mention of such a change twenty years ago would have been scouted as revolutionary. The appointment of three Professors, two of whom divided the Biblical and Theological department between them, was esteemed a considerable step in advance, and a sufficiently great achievement for one generation to accomplish. And if we recollect what the previous state of these institutions had been, it is impossible to deny that it was so. Unfortunately, the start which was then made, and which seemed to be only a beginning of better things, has not been sustained by further progress, and there is still room for reform and fuller development. Our colleges must be on a larger scale if they are to continue to command the services of our ablest men. In no position, surely, could more noble service be rendered to the Churches than in the presidency of a great training institution. Where would the influence of personal character, will, guidance, and powerful intellectual stimulus be more strongly felt, and more widely diffused? Who could so fitly fill the place of a Dean amongst us, enjoying time for literary pursuits by which the Churches as a whole would be benefited, and yet at the same time doing most valuable work, which would have immediate and visible results, as one holding such an office?

It may be doubted whether our Churches are even now prepared to see a few heads of houses of this kind. They certainly were not when Lancashire College inaugurated what was then thought a new era in our collegiate arrangements. There were not a few who thought that the innovations were too great, and those who desired greater efficiency felt it necessary to wait in hope. If, however, any contemplated such a measure as that we have suggested, they must have been a very insigni-

cant minority. Dr. Vaughan, therefore, was called to the duties of a chair, for which his previous studies had but imperfectly prepared him, and in which it cannot be said with truth that he distinguished himself. The men who are fitted to win a reputation as teachers of dogmatic theology are few, and they require peculiar gifts and an exceptional range of reading. Their minds should be subtle and analytic, not afraid of speculation, and yet able to rein it in, with considerable originality and power of spiritual insight, in sympathy with free and progressive thought, and yet with that sobriety of judgment which would preserve from crudity and rashness. They must, too, have made theology a special study, looking at it in its relations to science and learning generally, and familiar with the changes through which it has passed, and the influences to which they are due. It is no reflection on Dr. Vaughan to say that all these qualifications did not meet in him. He was a man of true genius, but whether it was of the style which under any circumstances would have made him a great theologian is not so clear. But circumstances had all been against him. A thoroughly cultured man finds it very hard to make any scholastic attainments, or, indeed, to preserve those he has already, amid the wear and tear of a Dissenting pastorate. The marvel is that Dr. Vaughan had done so much, but it was in other departments than theology that he had principally occupied himself, and it was indeed almost a new subject to him when he undertook the responsibilities of the Manchester chair.

One of his difficulties at first was that several of his students had previously been under the tuition of an acute and able theologian. The Rev. Gilbert Wardlaw, the Professor of Theology at Blackburn, was a man whose full worth the Churches never fully appreciated. He was modest, retiring, humble. His gifts were not of the popular order, and his true intellectual power was known only to those who were brought into close contact with him, and were capable of appreciating alike the beautiful simplicity and unselfishness of his character, the acuteness and vigour of his intellect, and the amplitude of his mental resources. He had devoted himself almost exclusively to theology, and had a wonderful power of inspiring the enthusiasm of his students for his own favourite pursuit. Had the Lancashire Committee of that time been wise enough to leave his old subject in his hands, giving Dr. Vaughan the Presidency, for which physical infirmity incapacitated Mr. Wardlaw, the result would we believe have been so eminently beneficial to the College as to justify the wisdom of so daring a venture. Alas! alas! things will not always shape themselves as we desire, or even as we see to be best. Such an arrangement could not be. Mr. Wardlaw was left to retire into obscurity, and those of his former students who entered Manchester resented what they considered the injustice done, him, and

were prejudiced to some extent against their new Professor. That prejudice, which ought never to have existed, was lived down, but it was a difficulty against which Dr. Vaughan had for some time to struggle.

Nor was it by power in the lecture-room, so far, at least, as a mastery of theological difficulties was concerned, that he subdued it. It was rather by the force of a strong and masculine intellect, which impressed every candid mind, and made all feel that whatever flaws might be detected in the technicalities of his theological scholarship, Dr. Vaughan towered head and shoulders above most of his associates. Looking back on his lectures, we cannot but feel that they had a higher merit than was generally admitted. Theological students are not fair critics of their Professors. They expect from them more than is reasonable, and they are discontented because their extravagant expectations are not fulfilled. If they are learned and systematic they are voted dull and prosy, perhaps wooden. If they break up new ground, or seek to stimulate the thought of their students rather than supply them with material ready-made to their hands, they are said to be rhetoricians, not scholars. It is not more difficult for a man to be a hero to his valet, than for a Professor of Theology to be a competent guide in the eyes of his students. Dr. Vaughan, like most others of his class, was judged severely, and his lectures were better than was admitted at the time. There was always something fresh in the thought and striking in the mode of its presentation, and his way of looking at a subject was itself suggestive. Many men could have given more learned dissertations, who would not have communicated anything like the mental impetus which he never failed to impart to those whom some prepossession did not make impervious to his influence.

It is for this that he is chiefly remembered and appreciated by the men who honour him most, and are most ready to admit their indebtedness to him. They may not feel that he gave them any new views, that he did much to mould their opinions, that there are epigrammatic sayings of his which still linger in their memory, or favourite speculations which still have a fascination for their minds. If they were asked what they had actually learned from him, they might find it hard to answer. But they are not the less conscious of immense benefit derived from him as a Professor. The very presence of such a man—one so fully possessed with a love of learning so intense that it amounted to a passionate enthusiasm—himself a living and impressive example of the fruit of diligent perseverance—a self-taught man, who was yet able to hold his own against those who had enjoyed all possible advantages by the sheer force of that hard work to which earnestness in intellectual pursuits had inured him, was itself a lesson for a student. He carried with him everywhere, too, a sense of power which told upon the minds

and roused men to a laudable ambition. In truth, we know of none who came near him who did not feel more or less of this. His talks at the dinner-table or in the study were always full of life and freshness, revealing his own shrewdness in the judgment of men and things, and quickening the thought and observation of others.

He was, what those who saw him from the outside only would hardly believe, a man of great simplicity of character. He could, indeed, lay down the broad outlines of the policy which men ought to pursue in a manner which would lead those who listened to regard him as a practised diplomat. But when it came to practical action, there was an impulsiveness, a directness, and an unsuspecting confidence which made very short work of any attempts at management. In his conversation there sometimes seemed to be a wonderful respect for worldly wisdom, but in his own action there was very little of it. Indeed, to the absence of it may be traced some of his college difficulties. An early trouble was caused by a Welsh student, who had obtained admission to the College and was a cause of perpetual dissensions and heart-burnings, until it was found necessary to expel him. He was a youth of plausible manners, as was shown by the fact that he was able afterwards to impose first upon the Baptists and then upon the Church of England, in which he obtained a London curacy, but was soon detected by the Rector carrying on the same sort of tactics by which he had previously disturbed Lancashire College. Subtle and specious as he was, he could never have continued his mischievous tittle-tattle and falsehood so long, had Dr. Vaughan been less generous or less trustful. His nature, however, was singularly unsuspecting, and though he would sometimes repeat the old saying, that "we begin by trusting everybody, and end by trusting nobody," there was not the faintest sign of so unhappy a disposition in his own case. He stood upon his dignity and right, and resented all encroachments upon it. When he had an object to attain he sought it with great pertinacity and decision. If he had a battle to fight he was stout and resolute, and was not easily driven from a position he once took up; but he was fitter for conflict than for diplomacy. Though he might lay down a certain line of strategy, he was one of the last to play the part of a tactician. A review of the different controversies in which he was engaged would show how much trouble he might have spared himself if he had been more ready to doubt others and to maintain the reserve and caution which that doubt would have inspired. This, we are well aware, is very contrary to the idea many have formed of him. He was sagacious, and when he was consulted by others showed a very sound and cautious judgment, and thus he was supposed to be a very provident man. But when his own feelings were deeply engaged he was an entirely different man, and often erred from excessive openness and eagerness.

Very early in the course of his residence in Manchester he started the *British Quarterly Review*, in the face of many suspicions and great discouragement from various parties. In relation to it his conduct was hardly such as to disarm opposition or to allay doubt. His aim was clear to himself, and the manner in which he pursued it was straightforward from his point of view; but his mode of action provoked, and partly justified, severe criticisms, and not a little angry feeling was roused on all sides. The friends of the old *Eclectic*, which did immense service on its day, were not unnaturally displeased to see its position threatened by a new rival, and one which was started in such a way as to disparage its merits and work. There was political as well as literary antagonism, for Dr. Vaughan made no secret of his dissatisfaction with the more pronounced policy of the Extreme Left among his own friends, and one object which he contemplated in the establishment of the new *Review* was to advocate more moderate courses. The discussion was an unfortunate one, and for a time Dr. Vaughan suffered from it. But as time passed on the sore feeling of the time died away, and the value of a quarterly organ of Evangelical Nonconformity, such as the *British Quarterly* has proved itself to be, has come to be generally recognised, and it is now admitted that Dr. Vaughan did few better acts of service than its establishment.

On the other hand, the *Review*, instead of checking extreme Nonconformity, has itself been taken over to it, and now exists to bless the very movement which it was created to curse. The change was first wrought in Dr. Vaughan himself. He never was a Conservative, in truth he had nothing in him which would have tended to Conservatism except his æsthetic sympathies and a certain amount of aristocratic feeling, which manifested itself very strikingly in his outward bearing. His soul was all aglow with a love of liberty, which, on all great occasions was pretty sure to lead him right. When, therefore, he commenced a *Review*, in the hope of checking what he deemed the extreme Radicalism of certain Dissenters, it was with the intention of advocating a Liberalism which, to many, would itself have seemed sufficiently Radical. But events forced him far beyond the position he at first occupied, and, in fact, brought him abreast of those whom he had once feared as too advanced and aggressive. He was a keen observer of all that was going on in the Establishment, and was alarmed by the developments both of Rationalism and Ritualism among the clergy. To the Broad Church School the *Review* showed itself a most uncompromising opponent. To Mr. Maurice and his followers, indeed, Dr. Vaughan was so far unjust, that he sometimes failed to give them proper credit for the good points in their teaching. But he was specially impressed with the inconsistency between their teaching and the obligations they had con-

tracted by subscription. Even this, however, did not stir him so deeply as the Ritualist movement. That roused, as might have been anticipated, the strongest antipathies of his nature. The fervour of his Puritan zeal was fanned into a white heat by its Romish teaching. The passionate love of freedom by which his soul was possessed rebelled against its arrogant priestly pretensions. His ardent patriotism made him resent this attempt to rob the nation of its great Protestant heritage by those who were most bound to hold it inviolate from all attack. His love of truth was offended in this case, as in that of the Broad Church, by what in his judgment was a miserable tampering with most solemn vows. All these sentiments stirred him not merely against the party, but against the Establishment, which he felt to be the real cause of all these evils, and in whose continuance he saw a standing menace to Protestantism and to freedom.

To the same point was he led by his experiences in relation to national education. No one was more deeply impressed with the paramount importance of this great work to the well-being of the people, or was more intent on its promotion. Had Dissenters listened to his counsels, they would have been spared many of the dissensions and difficulties by which they have subsequently been hampered. Unfortunately, Dr. Vaughan's zeal for education, and willingness to enter into a concordat with the Liberal leaders of the day, by means of which, without any compromise of principle, Nonconformists might have continued to take their part in the great educational work of the country, was attributed to an imperfect appreciation of the Nonconformist view, or a want of full loyalty to it. It would be worse than profitless to rake up the dead ashes of old controversies; but it cannot be forgotten that up to the time when the Whig proposals embodied in the Minutes of Council were rejected by Nonconformists, and the rejection based on an abstract objection to the interference of the State with the teaching of the young, Dissenters had been in the van of educational progress. The British School was the pioneer, and it was only when its success was established that the clergy thought it wise to start rival institutions, in which the doctrines of the Establishment might be taught, and where their own influence would be undisputed and supreme. By the new departure of 1846, and the attempts of Nonconformists to compete with schools enjoying the patronage of the State, the vantage-ground which they had previously occupied was altogether lost. Dr. Vaughan foresaw that this would be the case, and did his best to save his brethren from a fatal mistake. He lived to come nearer to the platform of his old opponents as he saw the way in which the money of the nation was being used for the diffusion of Romish and Ritualist doctrines. That he would, had he survived to 1870, have thrown in his lot with those who contended for a national

system, in which the secular should be clearly separated from the religious, will scarcely be doubted by those who were in the habit of conversing with him in his later years, and noting the tendency of his opinions.*

The termination of his connection with the College was brought about by circumstances which cannot be recalled without regret. It was unquestionably the result of the controversy which led to the resignation of Dr. Davidson—a controversy in which Dr. Vaughan had felt himself constrained to take such a part, that he felt it undesirable for him to retain his office. Perhaps he was unduly sensitive, and yet his position at the time was not a pleasant one. We will not endeavour here to correct the misunderstandings which have been prevalent relative to a discussion which elicited a great deal of strong feeling, and threatened to divide the Congregationalists of Lancashire. It has often been criticised by those who had but a very imperfect knowledge of the facts; but it would answer no purpose now to pry into matters which had far better be

* A very interesting letter, in reply to an invitation from the Liberation Society to take part in the Triennial Conference of 1868, not only shows how far he had advanced in his opinions, but brings out in a striking way the noble spirit of the man. We are indebted to the kindness of the Secretary for permission to insert it here.

"Torquay, March 26th, 1868.

"MY DEAR MR. WILLIAMS,—I am much obliged to the Committee of the Liberation Society for the honour they have done me by asking me to take part in the approaching Conference, and I rejoice exceedingly in the favourable auspices under which your assembly will be convened.

"From the first I have been at one with the principle of the Society, though for some years I doubted the expediency of action in that form. But Providence has smiled on your labours, and is now manifestly taking the great work into its own hands.

"With regard to your invitation, my feeling is that the men who have toiled with you through the heat and burden of the day, through evil report and good report, are the men who should be conspicuous in your proceedings now. My conscience tells me that I am not a worshipper of success, that I am capable, if needs be, of suffering for a great principle, and I cannot escape from the impression that my taking part in your meeting would, with some persons, bear too near a resemblance to the conduct of certain sportsmen, who contrive to avoid the toil and peril of the chase, but take care if possible to be in at the death. I have a great contempt for people of that sort, and shrink from putting myself into a position where I may seem to resemble them.

"I have, as I hope, done something for the good cause after my own manner, and I shall probably find occasion for doing something more. But in regard to your Conference, I would venture to say, let the men who have been prominent with you when the weather was foul, be prominent with you now it has become more fair and promising. May the mind of the Master we serve pervade your assembly, and make it eminently successful!

"I fear that from special domestic circumstances I shall hardly be present at any of your meetings in May this year. I am, yours truly,

"ROBERT VAUGHAN."

allowed to pass into oblivion. If it were necessary it would be easy to vindicate Dr. Vaughan's action, so far at all events as its motive was concerned. He may, no doubt, have committed mistakes ; but, writing with a very intimate knowledge of his feelings and aims, and of the whole course of the discussion, we do not hesitate to assert that he acted throughout on a distinct and decided sense of duty. But this brought him into collision with many of his old friends, and believing that the only possibility of healing the dissensions was by his own removal, he magnanimously resigned a position, his continuance in which he knew would be displeasing to some, and feared might be injurious to the College. Dr. Vaughan succumbed, as we believe, quite unnecessarily to the feeling which had been excited, and which might have been trusted to die away under the charm of his personal influence.

Congregationalism cannot be so wholly incompetent for union and organised effort as some would fain represent it, when it is able to withstand such a shock as the agitation relative to Dr. Davidson and his teaching gave it in Lancashire. When we recollect the excitement which prevailed, and which, of course, reached more or less into all the Churches, the strong pamphlets which appeared on both sides, the vital issues admitted to be at stake, the long and anxious Committee meetings which were held, and whose heated discussions seemed often to threaten personal friendship, it seems almost incredible that the effect should have passed away. Had there been any appeal to law, it is impossible that this could have been so, or had the contending parties been bound together by a tie which each would have broken but for the fear that in doing so it would have given some advantage to its opponents, the differences could not have been so easily adjusted. The consciousness of liberty, and the existence of a common basis of agreement, served to promote a better understanding and more of mutual consideration, and ere long the differences were forgotten under the happier influences of fellowship in common Christian work.

When Dr. Vaughan made a public appearance in Manchester at the great public gathering of the Congregational Union, it was evident that the old enthusiasm with which he was regarded by the people still survived. It was an occasion not soon to be forgotten. The great Hall was crowded by an audience full of enthusiasm, and the speaker, in his happiest vein, delivered one of those magnificent orations which gave an impression of his real power, such as was not gathered from his sermons, or indeed any of his ordinary utterances. The noble speech, of which we have already spoken, in the same Hall on the occasion of Kossuth's visit to Manchester, and the glowing oration at the Birmingham meeting of the Congregational Union, which electrified the assembly and gave birth to the Bicentenary Com-

memoration, are worthy to stand by the side of that great Free Trade Hall deliverance. For the last time the Union listened to those eloquent appeals which had so often roused it to passionate sympathy and resolute effort, and it is pleasant to think that there was no sign of decay, either in the tone of the thought, the earnestness of the feeling, or the marvellous force of the oratory. If we could have chosen, we should have selected it as the proper place for the close of his public career. It had witnessed some of his oratorical triumphs before, and the last, and in some senses the most memorable of all, could not have been won in a more suitable place or under more appropriate surroundings than in the town associated with some of his best work and among the people (than whom England has none more appreciative and generous) who in former years had learned to admire his chivalrous temper and manly eloquence.

As a platform orator Dr. Vaughan had no rival among the Nonconformist ministers of his generation. He was a different man on the platform and in the pulpit. His solemn and dignified style of address in the latter interfered with his effectiveness. His sermons were rich in thought, finished in style, strong and forceful in appeal, and sometimes lighted up with brilliant rhetoric. But they lacked that directness and vivacity without which it is impossible to reach the hearts of the multitude. They were too abstract in substance and too uniformly correct in form. A little more play, both in thought and manner, would have added immensely to their effect. Those who enjoyed them (and they were all cultured men) enjoyed them intensely; but those whom they did not touch complained that they were heavy. Had Dr. Vaughan been less a man of the study, and, by entering more into the details of common life, secured a more practical character for his preaching, adapting his philosophical principles and abstract arguments to the common wants of men and translating them into their language, he would have been more successful. On the platform he was forced to do this, and hence his great power. There he was not hampered by considerations of what was proper and becoming in the preacher, and did not feel it necessary to put any restraint upon his intense emotions. Nor was he tempted to indulge in a line of thought more suited to the study or to the printed book than to an address spoken to men needing to be interested. The atmosphere, too, had its effect upon him, as was easily seen by those who watched him warm to his subject, and gather increasing force and vehemence as he advanced. His appearance and bearing were eminently in his favour. That noble head, whose general form and aspect are indelibly stamped on our memory, was that of a born leader of men; its massive contour, the broad and capacious forehead, on which intellectual power seemed to have stamped its mark,

the sense of force, and the air of quiet majesty which marked it always, and of late years the thin white locks which adorned it, and inspired an additional interest and respect, cannot be forgotten. Meet him when you would, there was a characteristic nobility and strength about him which commanded involuntary admiration. His oratory was in accord with his aspect. Nature had made him an orator, and he had wisely sought to cultivate to the highest point his native gifts. Whether this training had really increased his power may be open to doubt. Certainly it was when he was able to remember the rules of his art, and try to reduce them to practice, that he was most constrained and least effective, and, on the contrary, when the excitement of the time raised him above all such considerations and left him to the free play of his own genius that he achieved the most brilliant successes. Then there was occasionally a Demosthenic force, or shall we not say a prophetic fervour and inspiration, that swept over an assembly and carried them away as with an impulse they could not resist. The orator, like the poet, is born, not made. Finished performances, in which every word has been studied and the action and gesture prepared for it, may charm or astonish, but they do not, unless they are fired by the passion of the true speaker, take men's hearts by storm, and guide their opinions or affect their actions. A mere artist is soon detected, and whatever credit men may give him for his ability and skill, they resent any idea of his swaying their decisions. That Dr. Vaughan had studied the arts of rhetoric no one who heard him could doubt, but his power lay in that rare genius of which art was only the handmaid.

We have not left ourselves space to dwell on the closing years of his life, and we regret it the less because to us, cherishing the memory of the man in profound and reverent affection, there is something sad and touching about the period. The death of his gifted and amiable son, so true and noble an example of sanctified Christian intellect, but so early arrested in the great work he was so fitted to accomplish, appeared to have changed the aspect of life and the world to him. It occurred shortly before his resignation of the Presidency of Lancashire College, and may probably have had some influence in fixing his resolution. It is painful to recall the memories of that time, and of the change suddenly wrought in one who hitherto had been so bold and hopeful. Of course time had its effect upon him, and in his greatest depression he never so far gave way to the selfishness of sorrow as to abandon public duty. In these closing years he did the Churches frequent and noble service; but those who came very near him knew how much of his heart was in the tomb where lay the son whose brilliant promise had been to him a source of such just pride and sanguine anticipation. The end was unexpected. It seemed as though in the quiet retreat at Torquay he

might have enjoyed a brief season of honoured work among attached friends. But the Master did not so will it. He had done his work, and a noble work it was, done in noble and manly spirit; and in an hour when we looked not for it he was called to his reward. We have done but imperfect justice to his eminent worth and distinguished service; but if in the slightest degree we have helped to redeem the Congregational Churches from the reproach of suffering the name of one who and served them loved with singular loyalty and power to pass into oblivion, this tribute of affectionate remembrance has not been laid upon his tomb in vain.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

MARCH 4.—“ *Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.*”—

1 Peter v. 7.

THE value of the injunction contained in the former half of this verse depends entirely on its latter half, for until we can get men to believe in the care of God for them, we shall never persuade them to cast all their care upon Him. One reason, and perhaps the principal reason, why we find it so easy to appeal to our earthly friends for sympathy and help in time of trouble, is our assurance that they do love us and care for us; and, on the other hand, the difficulty we feel when we attempt to cast our burden on God, the effort that even Christian people find it involves, is the surest indication of how little we have understood of the meaning of these words, “He careth for you.”

And yet it must be confessed that it is not easy for any of us adequately to realise what they mean. There are some indeed who would at once say the words have no meaning. They see no “He” in the universe anywhere. The one thing they fail to find, so they tell us, is a Personal God. It is true they speak of Nature, not only with deep reverence, but in terms so warmly personal, that we are sometimes tempted to think their science has found what their faith had lost; but, if we may trust their own assertions, it is not so, for they assure us that whatever mystery there may be in Nature, there is no evidence of

* In the Lessons of the Sunday School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition; these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

a living God. Now it is manifest that men who hold this faith, if we may venture to call what is really a negation of belief by the name of faith, have no resource outside of themselves in times of sorrow and anxiety. They cannot appeal to Nature to help them to bear the burden of their care, for if there is no God to care for them, certainly Nature does not. No man can cast his care upon an It. A law or a force disdains even to think of such a thing as a human heart. The result is, that the materialist's creed destroys all the natural sense of dependence, the clinging to one above itself there is in the human heart. It fosters an inhuman quite as much as an ungodly type of character. And if ever the pressure of care becomes too heavy for the materialist to bear it alone, then one of two results will follow: either the creed breaks down, or the man does, that is, either he crushes his creed, or his creed crushes him. And this is why suicide has so often in the history of the world been the result of an atheistical philosophy.

But although atheism may be no temptation to us, we may still find it difficult to realise that God really cares for us. Possibly we do not doubt that He may care for the universe at large, or it may be even for this world and the human race, as a whole; but that He takes any interest in us, as individuals, is a harder thing to believe. We are all too prone to drift into the habit of thinking of God's care of His children as resembling that of a general over his troops, where the army may be well looked after, even though no individual soldier is known to him. But this is not the kind of care God takes of us. He is not a general, but He is a Father, and just as each child has his own special place in his father's heart, so God has room enough in His infinite heart for each one of us, and takes the tenderest and holiest interest in all that concerns us. We never rightly understand this text until we feel that it means, "He cares for me."

Perhaps it may be said that this is impossible, that the infinite and eternal God cannot concern Himself with the individual experience, the history, the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, of each human life; but we ask, why impossible? Inconceivable it may be and doubtless is, but not therefore impossible, and although the intellect may be unable to understand it, yet the heart may rest upon this blessed truth in perfect peace.

Or someone may say, "I cannot believe this, I cannot think God cares very much for me, or would He allow me to suffer as I do, and give me this weary burden of care to bear day by day?" But what would be thought of the child who said, "My father does not care for me, because he gives me all these hard lessons to learn, and does not let me run about and play all the day long"? Would you not tell him it was because his father did really care for him and for his future welfare and

happiness that he would not allow his child to do as he liked, but sent him to school, that by its discipline he might be prepared for the life that was yet before him? And so we are assured that these very trials and anxieties go to prove the truth of the text, and instead of casting the shadow of doubt over God's care, they are themselves the pledge and token of His love. If we had no care, then we might begin to doubt whether God cared for us.

The lesson, therefore, of this verse is very plain and very practical, and is very much the same as that contained in one of our Golden Texts last month. If we lift the burden of our care at all, we are to lift it *for the last time*, that we may cast it upon God. Once there it becomes God's care, not ours. We are no longer to have any anxiety about it. It is enough to know that because God cares for us, He will care for it.

Nor ought we ever to forget that this little word "all" in the text is meant to include even the trivial and passing anxieties of each day. To say that some cares are too insignificant to take to God in prayer and faith, is not really to honour Him, and it is to burden ourselves with an accumulation of little troubles that may weigh us down as heavily as greater cares. It has been said that "white ants pick a carcass quicker and cleaner than a lion does;" and these little cares which, in our mistaken reverence for God's greatness and glory, we refuse to "cast upon Him," may even more effectually destroy our peace than a single great trouble. Children, too, have their child-cares, and we should try and make them feel that He who "carries the lambs in His bosom" will not disdain to carry the lamb's sorrows as well.

MARCH 11.—"*And they went out, and preached that men should repent.*"—

Mark vi. 12.

The twelve Apostles had been chosen by our Lord some time before this. If we look back to the third chapter of this Gospel we shall find there (vv. 13, 19) the account of the original "ordination" of the Apostles, and their names. But they were not at once allowed to go out and preach. Christ kept them for a time near Himself, and taught them many things concerning His Kingdom, before He sent them forth to preach in His name. That time, however, had now come, and the Gospel of St. Matthew gives us (Matt. ix. 36—38) the special circumstance which led to the mission of the twelve. "When Jesus saw the multitudes," we are told, "He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." It was after these words were spoken that, as the 7th verse of this 6th chapter

of St. Mark tells us, "He called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two." This missionary work was implied in the special name our Lord Himself gave to the twelve. He called them "Apostles," that is, "men sent forth;" and in this Golden Text we have the object for which they were sent forth by Christ: "They went out and preached that men should repent." It would shorten many modern ecclesiastical controversies if this original meaning of the name and this original work of the Apostles were borne in mind. We hear a great deal said about the "Apostolical succession," and we are constantly being told that only those are in the true line of that succession who have received Episcopal ordination, and consequently only they have any right to preach the Gospel. Now it would seem, if we judged by Christ's idea of the Apostolic work, that no men so nearly resemble the original Apostles as our missionaries in heathen lands. First of all they bear the same name as the Apostles, although it is a Latin and not a Greek word. Next, they have been "ordained" just as the Apostles were, that is by prayer. Before our Lord chose the twelve we read (Luke vi. 12, 13) that "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." The absence of all the elaborate ritual that was seen in the consecration of the Levitical priesthood is very marked. There are no "holy garments," no girdle and ephod and mitre with which to invest them, no anointing oil, no solemn sacrifice at the altar, nothing but the loftiest and most spiritual act possible—prayer, and prayer prolonged throughout the whole night. And when we dedicate our missionaries to their great work in "preaching among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ," we are following the precedent of our Lord in ordaining them by solemn prayer and supplication to God. We leave it to the sacerdotal Churches to go to Judaism for their ceremonial when they ordain their priests. It is enough for us to follow the example of Christ Himself.

And last of all, our missionaries not only bear the same name and are set apart in the same way as the Apostles, but they are doing the same work.

They have been sent forth in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to preach His Kingdom among men, and as it was this mission that conferred the name on the twelve Apostles, it is hard to see, if there be any such a thing as an Apostolical succession—which may very reasonably be doubted—why the men who have succeeded to the Apostles' name and work should be denied a place in the Apostolical line. What if this be the real Apostolical succession after all?

It is also worthy of notice that directly Christianity came into the world the missionary spirit came with it. From the time of Christ downward it has been one of the distinctive marks of the religion

of Christ that it has been a missionary religion. If ever the missionary spirit has died out of the Church, it has been because the Church itself was dead, for as soon as new spiritual life was quickened in it, the old missionary enterprise returned in all its force. Now this Golden Text is specially interesting to us as containing the earliest beginnings of the great missionary work of the Church. But what a contrast between then and now! Then, the whole world was lying in wickedness, and not one nation of all the peoples of the earth had even heard the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, every country has heard the Gospel, and many nations have had their history and destiny entirely changed by it. Then, the whole number of missionaries was twelve. Now, there are tens of thousands who are preaching everywhere the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this wonderful contrast between Christianity as it was then and is now, ought to confirm and increase our confidence in its final triumph. There are times when we are tempted to despair of the conversion of the world to Christ, when the apparently slow progress that Christianity is making among some nations staggers our faith; but we ought to remember that the work that still remains for it to do is not greater than, if it be so great as, the work it has already done.

It is not really so hard for us to believe that Christianity is destined to become the religion of the whole earth, as it would have been if we had seen Peter, or James, or John go out on this first missionary journey, to have believed that the little seed they were planting would in so short a time have grown into the great tree it now is. What the Gospel has accomplished is more than enough to assure us of what it will yet accomplish in the world.

We must not, however, forget what it was the Apostles were sent to preach. They "preached that men should repent." That was the first word of the Gospel message. It was not its last; that was yet to come; but it was its first. When men were willing to acknowledge they had been sinners, and to leave their sins, they had made the first step towards entering the Kingdom of Heaven. And to this message the Apostles never made any exception. Doubtless some who listened to their preaching were men and women of pure lives and blameless character, and yet the announcement came to them, just as it did to "publicans and sinners," that they should repent. The Apostles' preaching was not that some men needed repentance, but that all needed it; they preached "that men should repent." And this, although it is but the first word of the Gospel, must be our message to-day. We must so preach and teach that, whether men believe or not, they shall understand the Gospel makes no exception in its demand for repentance. It is very tolerant to imperfect faith, and even to imperfect penitence; but it has no word

of comfort or hope for the man who refuses to admit that he needs to repent. Even if there have been no cases of outward transgression of God's law, cases of immorality, these are but one half, and the lesser half, of sin. Ungodliness, the putting of self before God, is the one sin with which the Gospel charges every man, and the root of every other kind of transgression and sin. And it is of this men need to repent first of all. They may have never sinned against their fellow-men, but they have all sinned against God, and until this crime, the crime of a life whose secret centre has been self and not God, is acknowledged and repented of, the Gospel itself cannot save them.

Even little children may be taught they have many child sins that need repentance, if they are to enter into the Kingdom of God. But let us be careful in all our teaching to be quite clear as to what repentance really is. It is not sorrow for sin, although it invariably produces that, so much as real willingness to abandon sin. The tears the prodigal son shed when he thought of his distant home and his father whom he had sinned against, or the sorrow he expressed to his father when he reached home, were not his repentance, although they followed his repentance. He repented the moment he turned his face homeward again, and with true purpose of heart resolved to leave the far country and his life of sin there, saying, "I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." And so with us, the best test that we have repented is, not whether we have felt so much grief for our sin, but whether we have truly left the sins themselves.

MARCH 18.—"*He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in His light.*"—John v. 35.

The use of the past tense in this verse—"he was a burning and a shining light"—seems to be an indication that John had been already beheaded by Herod. But it is possible that our Lord speaks of John's ministry thus, not because he was dead, but because his work was done. In its very nature the work of a forerunner, of him whose duty it is to announce the coming of "One mightier than he," can be only temporary. Just as the morning star which "opes the gates of day," and goes before the sun, is lost in its light as soon as the sun has risen, so John's light was absorbed into the "Great Light" that was then shining among men. Indeed, the term which Christ here uses of John, and which has been unfortunately translated "light" in the first part of our Golden Text, exactly expresses John's subordination to the Master he came to proclaim. If we rendered the words, "he was the burning and shining *lamp*," instead of "light," we should see at once that John's mission was

meant to be only for a little time. We do not live in the light of a lamp, we kindle it whilst the night lasts, but when the day is come the lamp is extinguished, for its work is done. We have the same contrast between the lamp that serves us for a little while in the darkness, and the sunshine of the full day, in a beautiful verse in the second Epistle of St. Peter i. 19: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

But John came to do more than be a lamp to light men until the "Sun of Righteousness arose." He came to light men to Christ, to show them the Lamb of God, and the way to Him. And it was for their neglect of John's special mission our Lord reproves the Jews in this text. They took John's work as an end in itself, instead of a means to an end, and, as if he were the "true light," they "rejoiced in his light." They forgot John was only a lamp that was lighted to lead them to Christ, or, as Bengel well puts it, that John was "to be used, not enjoyed." In fact, if they had understood John's mission at all, they could not have rejoiced, but they would have repented instead. But even this joy in John's light did not last. There is a covert rebuke in Christ's words that we must not overlook: "Ye were willing *for a season* to rejoice in his light," and it was but for a season. At first great multitudes crowded to hear John preach, all classes going out to receive his baptism; Pharisees, Sadducees, publicans, soldiers, and the common people, alike thronged to him, as to the herald of the coming Kingdom of the Messiah. But when they heard what John's message really was, when they found all the sternness of Elias himself in him, when each class was severely rebuked for its sins, and bidden to repent, then their joy soon turned to disgust, and though they still believed John to be a prophet, yet, like their fathers, they hardened their hearts against his words. If they had really rejoiced in John's light, they would never have rejected Christ.

We must not, however, in condemning the sin of the Jews, who refused to listen to John as "he bare witness to the truth," forget that if we reject Christ our sin is much greater than theirs. They had the testimony of John, but we have not only John's testimony, but the evidence of all the wonderful works Christ did during His life, and has been doing ever since among men, to convince us. In the next verse to the Golden Text, Christ calls this testimony a "greater witness than that of John," and as the witness is greater, so the sin of refusing to listen to it is greater still.

Many people who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who have not submitted to His authority, seem to think that at the very most, even if Christ proves to have spoken the truth, they have only

made a mistake in their unbelief. But it is not so. Unbelief is not a mistake, it is a sin, and nowhere does our Lord speak of it as if it were merely an intellectual error that might easily be excused. Whatever exceptions there may be in individual cases—and we are not perhaps justified in pronouncing judgment as to individual unbelief—yet the words of the Lord Jesus are a solemn warning of its guilt: “He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” It will be well for those who have classes of young men or of young women, specially to insist upon this in their teaching. Young men are in danger in the present day of excusing their unbelief on intellectual grounds, forgetful of the truth that it is as possible for the intellect to sin as it is for the flesh, and that evil habits of thinking are quite as natural to our sinful nature, and quite as dangerous to the soul, as evil habits of living. Faith in Christ is not a mechanical or arbitrary test of our character, it is a moral test, and the highest of all moral tests, and the want of faith may therefore prove that it is the heart, far more than the head, which is wrong.

Once more. John the Baptist, as the forerunner of Christ, came to announce His coming. He pointed forward and said, “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!” Our work, as disciples of Christ, is different, and yet it is the same. We cannot tell men that Christ is to come, but we may tell them He has come. John was a “burning and a shining light,” but the light all streamed not on himself, but on Him who “came after him,” and “whose shoes’ latchet” John felt himself unworthy to “unloose.” We may be lamps too, in whose brightness men may see not us, but Christ. Even a child’s hand may hold a light, and sometimes may hold it nearer the way, and so light the path that leads to Christ better than an older hand could. The words are still true of many a home that but for the children who have taken there the truth they have learned in their Sunday-school the home would be still in darkness: “A little child shall lead them.”

MARCH 25th.—“*Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*”—Rev. ii. 10.

This verse might almost be called “The Martyr’s Text.” It occurs, as we see, in the message of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Church at Smyrna, and was evidently intended to inspire and sustain their courage in some persecution that was shortly to come upon them. Twelve years after this letter was sent to “the angel of the Church at Smyrna,” Polycarp, who had been one of the disciples of the Apostle

John, was its bishop, and it is quite possible he was so now. Polycarp, at any rate, would never forget these words of the Lord Jesus; for seventy-two years after they were written, when he was quite an old man—tradition says nearly a hundred years old—he was called to seal his faith with his blood. The story of his martyrdom is one of the most beautiful and touching in the history of the Church. When urged on his trial to blaspheme Christ, he said, "Eighty and six years have I served Christ, and He has never done me wrong; how can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" And when at last he was about to be fastened to the stake with nails, as seems to have been the cruel custom at Smyrna, he said, "It is needless; leave me alone! He who gives me strength to endure the flame will enable me to stand firm on the pile." They tied his hands behind his back, and then the fagots were kindled, and the old man passed into his Saviour's presence to receive the "crown of life," of which he had often spoken to his people at Smyrna, and which Christ had promised to those who were "faithful unto death."

It was perhaps for this reason that this verse was selected as the "Golden Text" to accompany the martyrdom of John the Baptist, which is our morning lesson for to-day.

What a sad and terrible story it is! The guilty Herodias, living in sin with her brother-in-law Herod, hated John for his fearless rebuke of her crime, and dreaded lest Herod's fear of John should lead him to put her away. She had, as St. Mark tells us (chap. vi. 19), "a quarrel," or, as the margin very correctly renders it, "an inward grudge against him, and would have killed him, but she could not." At last an unexpected opportunity comes for wreaking her vengeance on John. In the very castle where John was confined in prison Herod makes a great banquet on his birthday, to which he invites all the great men about him. Herodias sees her chance, and prepares for it. When the banquet had far advanced, and the wine had been flowing freely, her daughter Salome, instructed beforehand, entered the hall, and danced before them all a shameful dance, that only too plainly proved how the malignant hatred of Herodias against John had crushed all a mother's jealousy for the honour of her daughter. The rest may best be told in the graphic words of St. Mark, vi. 22: "When the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? and she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me

by and by* in a charger, the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother."

So true it is, as someone says, "That when man falls, he falls from heaven to earth; but when woman falls, she falls from heaven to hell." And so our Lord's forerunner joined the "noble army of martyrs," and being "faithful unto death," received with them "the crown of life."

Now, there are many lessons that suggest themselves to us as we read this story of John's death, but we have only space for two of the most important. First of all, what a remarkable difference there is between the way in which John's death was regarded by his disciples and the importance attached to Christ's death by the New Testament writers. We read of John the Baptist's death, but that is all; it is never referred to again; but Christ's death fills the whole of the Apostolic Epistles, and His Cross finally becomes the very symbol of Christianity itself. And yet what was there in the two deaths to account for this remarkable difference in the importance attached to each? Both John and Jesus were prophets; both were murdered, and both were murdered because of the hatred their teaching had inflamed against them; why, then, should one death pass into comparative insignificance, and the other become vaster and vaster in its importance until it became the one hope of the Church of Christ?

Judged by any merely human standard, John's death would have seemed the more likely to have left a permanent impression on the Jewish people. He filled a wider place in Palestine than our Lord did; he was better known; he was more generally regarded as a prophet; he was altogether the more popular teacher of the two, and yet his death passes into oblivion, whilst Christ rises into such greatness of meaning that the life of His Church is said to flow from it; and, as a matter of fact, the one permanent sacrament which the Church has possessed from her earliest history, the "Lord's Supper," commemorates this, and this alone. Is there any explanation to be given of this remarkable divergence of meaning, of moral and spiritual value, attached to these two deaths, if Jesus died, as John died, a martyr to truth?

Nor is this all. Many people—and I am indebted to Dr. Reynolds'

* It is a curious illustration of the inveterate procrastination to which human nature is subject, that this phrase, which originally meant "immediately," now means anything but immediately.

suggestive and exhaustive work on "John the Baptist" for the thought—in the present day assure us that the Resurrection of Christ from the dead is only a mythical story, to which no historical value can be attached. If so, how was it no such story gathered about John the Baptist's death? The materials for such a legend actually offered themselves. Herod actually said, when he heard of the wonderful works of our Lord, "This is John the Baptist; *he is risen from the dead*; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him" (Matt. xiv. 2). Luke tells us (Luke ix. 7) the rumour was widely spread, and Herod was perplexed, "because *it was said of some* that John had risen from the dead." Here, then, are all the necessary materials for the growth of such a legend as the resurrection of John. Here is an excited state of mind among his foes as well as among his friends; here is an actual rumour, vaguely circulating from mouth to mouth, that John is risen from the dead. No more favourable soil for the growth of a legend could be conceived. Yet it does not grow. The rumour perishes, and John's death becomes the end of John's work. But with the death of the Lord Jesus Christ it is not so. None of the favouring circumstances that attended John's death are present; no prophet succeeds Him whose mighty works could give rise to such a rumour as Christ's miracles suggested concerning John; no whisper of his resurrection comes from Herod, or from the common people; and yet within twenty-seven years of that death we find the belief in the Resurrection of Christ had travelled throughout the Roman world, and the fact appealed to by St. Paul as the foundation of the Christian faith. If Jesus died as John died, a martyr to truth; if the death of Jesus was the end of His work, as the death of John was the end of his, these things are very difficult, if not impossible, to explain.

On the other hand, if it be true that the death of Christ was unique in its relation to human transgression; if "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures;" if "He was buried and rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures," then all is intelligible enough. Nothing but the Atonement justifies the Resurrection, and nothing but the Resurrection explains the Atonement.

The last lesson may be just suggested. It is not necessary to die for Christ in order to be "faithful unto death." The word "martyr" means "a witness," and he who witnesses for the Lord Jesus by a holy and Christlike life, although he may never be called to the martyr's death, will receive from Christ's own hands the martyr's crown.

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G. S. BARRETT.

UNIVERSITY LOCAL EXAMINATIONS.

II.

IT is difficult perhaps for the world at large to realise the extent of the effort on the part of the older Universities, or, rather, the greatness of the sacrifice of long-cherished principles, which was involved in the establishment of the Local Examinations. The older Universities—Oxford and Cambridge—have always been, first and foremost, *teaching* bodies. In earlier times they were that and nothing else. Compared with the length of days with which they themselves are credited, their examinations are of quite modern date. In fact, examinations, at their introduction and throughout their ever-widening development, were, until recently, looked upon simply as an accessory to University teaching—an appanage—almost an excrescence—a process which had been forced upon the Universities rather by the necessity of deciding between a continually increasing number of aspirants for University prizes and emoluments, than by any strong feeling that teaching without examination was one whit less effective or satisfactory. Till within a few years ago, the students on the royal foundation of King's College, Cambridge, obtained their degrees without any examination, and at this very day we have only to look across the water to Germany to find Universities allowing their students to go through a University course without examination. University teaching might be followed by examination, or it might not; at all events, in the latter case, no less than in the former, a University would consider that it was fulfilling its normal function as a fosterer of the highest education; for of that function teaching is the essence, while examination is an accident.

But the introduction of "Local Examinations" would establish a principle the very reverse of this. To concede the demand for the University examination of students who had not been under University teaching, would be to travel out of the legitimate province of a University, according to the point of view of some; or, at least, to make a very wide extension of its boundaries. From the one point of view, which would be that of the out-and-out opponents of the movement it was like calling upon the chief cashier of the Bank of England to audit the accounts of the Joint Stock Banks; from the other, which would be that of its cautious advocates, it was as though a man were to contemplate adding the business of a merchant to that of a manufacturer. And before the measure could be carried, the opponents had to be converted or outvoted, the advocates, to be convinced of its prudence or practicability. The moral claims of the professional and business classes to receive aid

from the Universities in obtaining a good general education for their children had to be recognised. It had to be recognised that the whole social order had changed, since the days when rich and poor, having a thirst for knowledge in common, flocked to the Universities at the age of fifteen or sixteen to leave it for the work of the world at an age at which boys are now still at school—the days when University statutes against playing marbles on the Senate-house steps were far from being the dead letter they are now. While the physical sciences had grown and developed, and, owing to their intimate connection with manufactures and locomotion, had acquired such social force as almost to alter the centre of gravity, so to speak, of English thought and of English social and political life, the Universities still maintained their old narrow curriculum with only the barest possible recognition of the new sciences. While trade and commerce, under the new impulses thus communicated to them, and under pressure of more formidable rivalries than heretofore, were making such demands upon the energies of the nation as to necessitate the entrance of vast numbers of the sons of the middle classes into business at the age of eighteen at the latest, the Universities were still demanding three or four years' residence commencing at that age, as the first condition of a University diploma. In these two ways were they slowly but surely landing themselves high and dry out of the current of English middle-class life.

Now those who were foremost in the movement for the University examination of students who had not received, nor were likely to receive, University teaching, were actuated by the strongest desire to see the Universities well back again in the full stream of English intellectual life. It was pointed out that the advantages would not be all on one side. The fears of the more timid sympathisers were overcome by the argument that a greater knowledge of the educational wants of the country, would contribute to the improvement of University life and studies: while a wider knowledge of University method and aims, to say nothing of the free hand with which it has always rewarded merit out of rich resources, would in the long run increase, rather than diminish, the number of resident students. To those who feared that the new A.A. would dim the glory of the old B.A., or that, if the former could be earned at eighteen, few would care to spend three years in residence to obtain the latter at twenty-one, the reply was that the two titles would represent two such different courses of study and amounts of proficiency, that there was no fear of their real significance being misunderstood, and their relative values confounded. "The English are a practical people," one of the promoters of the movement is reported to have said, "and, within a few weeks after the appearance of the first A.A., the public press will assign its own estimate to the mark." The public

UNIVERSITY LOCAL EXAMINATIONS.

has done so in a way which will have shown these alarmists how groundless were their fears. The title has now been adopted by Oxford, for nineteen years; and, as Cambridge has all along declined to adopt it, and has contented itself with offering a plain certificate, the comparative popularity of the two examinations ought, in the absence of large counterbalancing differences between the two, to show whether the popular verdict has assigned a high estimate to the title as against the certificate, or not. What are the facts? As we have before noticed, the Cambridge examinations, which only lead to a certificate, are twice as popular as the Oxford examinations which lead to the title A.A. To cite other evidence, does anyone thus distinguished think of putting A.A. after his name, as is the custom with the old degree titles? And if not, why not? The truth is, the world has wisely declined in this particular instance (would it were always as wise!) to be bewildered by more academical titles than have already forced a recognition from it. In this respect it has not only shown its sense, but done incalculable benefit to generations of students.

Nothing could have been more prejudicial to the cause of true education than that any definite honour, conferred upon students of eighteen years—barely on the threshold of real knowledge—should have drawn away their attention from the proper attitude in which these examinations ought to be approached, if any solid and lasting good is to be the outcome; should have caused them to mistake the means for the end; should have tempted them, in fact, to come forward as candidates for the sake of a distinction upon which a commercial value had been set, and not for the lasting benefit the examinations might confer as healthy stimulators of self-culture.

If we are addressing any would-be students in these pages, let them bear in mind that examinations are, when in their proper place, simply means to certain ends. For our part, we are extremely anxious that there should be no mistake about the ends we have in view in bringing the subject of Local Examinations thus prominently before them. The ends aimed at by us are no less than the highest, viz. to give opportunities for the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake under the guidance of these examinations. And in pointing out in full detail their requirements, with some practical methods for preparing for them, we confidently look for equally high aims in the student in whose interests we are working.

These examinations, if rightly used, may serve—

(1) To direct the student to a suitable course of study; (2) to keep the mind upon a limited, well-defined portion of a large subject, be it a science, a language, or an art, for a time sufficient to make life-long impressions; (3) to give the student a satisfactory test and guarantee

of how far the subject grappled with has been mastered, how much is still wholly or partially undigested.

We have said that the requirements of the two Universities, Oxford and Cambridge, for a title or certificate in the Local Examinations differ in several more or less important particulars. It is not our purpose to enter into the causes of these differences, nor to make any allusion to the efforts which have been made from time to time—till now, without success—towards complete assimilation of the two systems; but simply to record the fact, and then to give intending students just so much information about these differences as will enable each to judge which system of examinations is most useful for his or her purpose.

It will be as well to get the religious difficulty out of the way by giving, at the outset, the regulations of the two Universities in respect of the examination in Religious Knowledge.

At Oxford, the examination in the "Rudiments of Faith and Religion" consists of two parts: (1) Holy Scripture, (2) Prayer Book. All candidates must take up both parts for examination, "unless their parents or guardians object on conscientious grounds," in which case a special form has to be filled up to that effect. Candidates in whose behalf objection has thus been made have two courses open to them: they may either take up some other subject altogether, to make up the minimum number of subjects in which they must pass to qualify for a certificate, or they may be examined in the first part (Holy Scripture) only, and in some additional portion of Holy Scripture named as a substitute for the examination in the Prayer Book, and count the whole as one of their required subjects.

At Cambridge, the examination in "Religious Knowledge" consists of three parts—viz. (a) Holy Scripture, (b) Prayer Book, (c) Whately's "Christian Evidences" (juniors), or Paley's "Horæ Paulinæ" (seniors). All candidates must be examined in this section, unless their parents or guardians object, and must satisfy the Examiners in (a) and in either (b) or (c). No candidate can be examined in more than two of the three parts.

On the whole, the regulations of the two Universities may be considered to be almost equally liberal towards Nonconformists. The Oxford declaration of objection is slightly more stringent, as it requires a distinct statement that objection is made *on conscientious grounds*, and all who decline the Prayer Book, even if they accept the Scripture portion of the examination, have to sign it. Cambridge is contented with a simple declaration of objection, which, however, need not be signed at all, if the objection goes no further than to the Prayer Book—that is, does not also extend to the Whately or Paley examination. On

the other hand, a Nonconformist who objected not only to the Church of England Prayer Book—which it may be taken for granted he would do, whatever the particular phase of his nonconformity—but also to the point of view taken by Archbishop Whately in his exposition of the Evidences of Christianity, or to Paley's delineation of the motives and modes of thought of the great Apostle of the Gentiles—as a Unitarian, for instance, might very reasonably be expected to do—would find no alternative under the Cambridge regulations but to decline the subject altogether. With Oxford, however, the case is different; a candidate may pass in the section with a knowledge of Holy Scripture only, and, as the questions are set directly from the text of the Bible, and are almost exclusively historical and critical, it is quite possible for Nonconformists of all shades of opinion to face this part of the examination without doing despite to their consciences. The writer of this article has passed pupils in this section of the Oxford Examinations who have professed every variety of nonconformity—Unitarians and even Jews. As an Evangelical Nonconformist, no reader of the CONGREGATIONALIST, one would presume, would take exception to Whately or Paley; under these circumstances, the regulations of the University of Cambridge, as far as the examination in religious knowledge is concerned, will be acceptable, on the ground that no declaration of objection will then be required of the candidate.

The following questions, taken from the Cambridge Senior Examination paper in Scripture (2 Samuel, 1 Kings, St. Mark), set December 1876, are a fair sample of what is required of students under this section: Give an account of the dimensions and plan of the Temple. What were the changes of dynasty in Israel during the period covered by 1 Kings? How did our Lord argue with the Sadducees that there is a Resurrection? Explain certain passages (given), and quote the context in which they occur. With what events are certain places (given) connected?

Proceeding with our subject, it is necessary to explain that at both Universities there are two separate classes of students for the purposes of examination—viz. juniors, those under sixteen years of age, and seniors, under eighteen; and there are separate subjects and separate sets of papers for each. But, as our object in giving these details relating to the Local Examinations is solely that which was stated at the commencement of the article in our January number—namely, to draw the attention of our younger readers to the use that can be made of these examinations for self-culture, in the hope that they may be induced to put themselves through a prescribed course of study within the limit of these examinations, with that view—we propose to omit further account of the details of the Junior Examination. We will

suppose that we are addressing young persons (of either sex) of fifteen or sixteen years of age, who are prepared to put themselves through a course of study with a view of presenting themselves for the Senior Examination of either Oxford or Cambridge in two or three years' time.

When they have accomplished this, it will be open to them to continue their studies with a view to the Higher Examinations of Oxford, Cambridge, or London, for students over eighteen years of age, of which more hereafter.

At present, keeping our purpose steadily in view, we proceed to give an abstract of the requirements of the two Universities, which we shall follow up by some practical hints and suggestions as to the best mode of setting about and prosecuting a two or three years' course with the object above-named.

Oxford Regulations.—Every candidate is required to pass in certain "preliminary" subjects, and no amount of excellence in any other part of the examination will save a student from failure who does not satisfy the Examiners in these preliminary subjects. They are :—

1. Writing from memory a passage from a short English poem (such as Milton's "Lycidas," Pope's "Essay on Man," or Johnson's "Vanity of Human Wishes"), with questions testing knowledge of the subject matter of the poem and of English grammar generally. 2. Writing a short piece of English composition on one of a number of topics set for the candidate to select from. 3. Arithmetic.

The other subjects of examination are arranged under various sections—viz. (1) Rudiments of Faith and Religion, (2) English, (3) Languages, (4) Mathematics, (5) Physics, (6) Drawing, (7) Music.

In addition to the preliminary subjects, every candidate is required to satisfy the Examiners in at least two of the sections, (1), (3), (4), (5), or, if (1) is declined, in two of the sections, (2), (3), (4), (5). Presuming that none of our readers are likely to present themselves for examination in the Book of Common Prayer, the following (being the subjects set for June, 1877) will give them a fair idea of the amount of Scripture that they will be expected to prepare, to enable them to count Religious Knowledge as one of the two required subjects under the alternative given above.

1. Genesis, Exodus i.—xx., St. Luke, the Acts of the Apostles. 2. 2 Chronicles, Jeremiah xxvi.—lii. (substitute for Prayer Book).

The English section comprises : 1. A special portion of English history and literature, with general outlines of the whole of English history. 2. A play of Shakspeare, and a portion of the prose writings of Bacon, Milton, or Johnson. 3. Political Economy and English Law. 4. Geography, physical, political, and commercial, with map-work. A knowledge of at least two out of these four subjects is required.

The Languages section comprises : Latin, Greek, French, German, and Italian ; and a knowledge of at least one language is required. There are set portions of Latin and Greek to be got up. In 1877 they were—Latin : Cicero, "De Officiis," book iii., and Virgil, "Æneid," ii. Greek : Herodotus, book vii., and Euripides, "Medea." In the other languages, candidates are expected to translate at sight passages previously unprepared.

In the Mathematical section, a knowledge of four books of Euclid and of Algebra to the end of quadratic equations is the minimum requirement ; and the examination goes as far as Trigonometry, Conic Sections, Mechanics, and Hydrostatics.

The Physics section comprises : 1. Electricity, Magnetism, Light, and Heat. 2. Chemistry. 3. Vegetable and Animal Physiology. 4. Geology and Mineralogy. And no candidate will pass in Physics who does not show a fair knowledge of one of these four classes of subjects.

Lastly, candidates may also offer themselves for examination in Drawing and in the Grammar of Music (together with the principles of Musical Composition), which are treated as extra subjects.

Cambridge Regulations.—The preliminary subjects are, English Grammar, including parsing and analysis of sentences ; and the principles and practice of Arithmetic. The other subjects are divided into nine sections : viz. A. Religious Knowledge, B. English, C. Latin and Greek, D. French and German, E. Mathematics, F. Natural Philosophy, including Chemistry, G. (a) Zoology, (b) Botany, (c) Physical Geography and Geology, H. Drawing, I. Music. Every candidate must pass in *three* at least of the Sections A, B, C, D, E, F, G, or in *two* of them, and in *one* of the Sections H, I. The conditions under which Section A. (Religious Knowledge) is to be taken have already been fully explained. The amount of Scripture required is somewhat less than at Oxford. The English section is similar to the corresponding section of the Oxford regulations, omitting the Prose Author and English Law, and adding a short piece of English composition. In the Latin and Greek section, there are set subjects in each language, as with Oxford, and a fair knowledge of one language is required.

Contrary to Oxford practice, French and German form a separate section, and there are set subjects in each language.

In section E. (Mathematics) the requirements of Cambridge are higher than at Oxford ; every candidate who is examined in this section must pass in Euclid, Books i.—iv. vi. xi., and in Algebra. The higher mathematical subjects, as also the amount required under sections F, G, H, I, are much the same as in the corresponding sections of the Oxford regulations.

Comparing the Cambridge regulations with the Oxford, we find Cam-

bridge makes lighter demands upon candidates for certificates in the following particulars :—

1. It requires fewer preliminary subjects—a by no means unimportant matter, considering that, as has been said, no amount of excellence elsewhere can compensate for failure here.

2. By the Oxford regulations, it appears that if only two sections are taken and Religious Knowledge is one of them, English is not allowed to count as the other. The effect of this is, to provide that every candidate who obtains a certificate shall have given evidence of acquaintance with at least one modern language other than his own, or an ancient language, or of some elementary knowledge of mathematics or physics. Now, no such stringency attaches to the Cambridge regulations. It will be seen from what has been stated above that a candidate may meet the minimum requirements by taking Religious Knowledge and English together with Drawing or Music. This brings the Cambridge certificate much more nearly within the reach of the average student.

3. The English section of the Cambridge Examination is not so heavy, and a passage for translation from set subjects in the modern languages, instead of a passage previously unprepared, is certainly a lighter requirement. On the other hand, Cambridge makes a heavier demand upon its candidates in mathematics, and perhaps also in physics.

One or two words on matters of detail. The Oxford Examination takes place at the end of May or beginning of June each year, at *thirty* local centres in different parts of England, and the University fee for seniors is 30s. The Cambridge Examination takes place in the third week of December at *eighty-seven* different local centres, no fewer than fourteen of which are in London and its suburbs; the University fee is 20s. The Cambridge Examination begins on a Monday, and ends on the Saturday following; the Oxford Examination also begins on a Monday, and ends on the Tuesday in the following week. Of course, no one candidate is under examination the whole of the time, as the number of subjects a candidate is allowed to take is strictly limited. The only other expenses of a candidate will be (1) the travelling expenses to the "local centre," (2) his board and lodging during the days of examination, supposing he lives too far off to go backwards and forwards every day, or has no friend with whom he can be housed, and (3) a small "local" fee, generally 5s. or 10s., to defray the local expenses of examination. A list of local centres and local secretaries for the time being, together with every information as to the mode of procedure with a view to forming a new local centre, and copies of the examination regulations, prizes offered, &c., may be obtained, for Oxford, on

application to the Rev. S. Edwardes, Merton College, Oxford, and for Cambridge, to Rev. G. F. Browne, St. Catherine's College, Cambridge. We should recommend intending students to at once write to one or both of these gentlemen for copies of the regulations of their respective Universities; and then they could not do better than purchase copies of the examination papers of last year; those for Oxford may be obtained from Messrs. Parker & Co., Oxford, price, 2s.; for Cambridge, from Messrs. Deighton, Bell, & Co., Cambridge, price, 2s., or through any bookseller. They will thus be able to understand more clearly than can be otherwise explained, the exact nature of the requirements of the two Universities. If after carefully thinking over the matter, and discussing it with those who are specially interested in all that interests them, one or more members of the same family or the younger members of two or three neighbouring families combined, should seriously desire to set about a course of study under the direction of these examinations, they will find the writer * ready to act as guide and counsellor for one or two of the first steps—proverbially the most difficult—of the way. The lions in the path at the outset are almost sure to be self-distrust, and a weighty consciousness of ignorance. But they have only to be boldly faced when they will turn tail and disappear. The mental powers develop so rapidly between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, as compared with the years of childhood, that processes of thought and reasoning which in our school days appeared to defy our powers of mental analysis, and left us horribly and yet unwarrantably impressed with the sense of our own stupidity, now, when re-submitted to our maturer intelligence, open themselves out before us as clearly as sunshine after rain. Why should not a number of young persons circumstanced as we described at the beginning of the first part of this article (see CONGREGATIONALIST, January 1877), make up their minds before the month is out, that they will apply themselves steadily to a definite course of study with a view to becoming candidates at (say) the Cambridge Local Examinations in December 1878? Let them start somewhere—with a play of Shakspeare, for instance. They will get a very good idea of the kind of questions that they must be prepared to answer, from the copy of the Cambridge Local Examination papers which they are supposed to have purchased. No doubt some members of their families who confess to being rather past the age for examinations will be glad to join in such a delightful intellectual treat as an exhaustive study of a play of the great master affords.

* I shall be glad to receive communications from any of my readers stating their difficulties as to the course of study they are pursuing or are wishing to pursue; these communications would guide the writer of this series of papers, and would enable him to offer the practical suggestions which would be most useful to the persons for whom the papers are intended.—ED.

But the question will arise, *How* is Shakspeare to be studied? Well, let us take a play, say, "*As You Like It*," the daintiest, airiest of all serious trifles, full at one and the same time of the simplest rusticity and deepest worldly wisdom. The language alone of Shakspeare is worth a study. It differs much from the English of to-day, but it is the English of our Bibles, and in studying the one, we obtain the key to many an obsolete phrase or word in the other.

Let those who are in earnest in this matter furnish themselves forthwith with the following books: Chambers' Etymological English Dictionary, 5s. Abbott's Shakspearian Grammar, 6s. *As You Like It*, with notes, Clarendon Press Series, 1s. 6d., and Peile's Primer of Philology, 1s.

In our next number we hope not only to supply some practical hints and guides to study which will enable our new students to turn the books we have named to the best account for their purpose; but also to suggest methods by which, each, for himself or herself, may learn to catch and analyse the subtle thought of the many-sided mind of Shakspeare, finding both intellectual pleasure and intellectual profit in the process.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION.

"**T**HAT thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God," was one of the urgent reasons assigned by the Apostle Paul for the injunctions and advice which he gave to Timothy. "That thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting"—not doctrines, but duties, are here referred to—was, he informs Titus, the object for which he was left behind in Crete. That both his "sons in the faith" might discharge these delegated functions effectively, they received from their aged friend those sagacious counsels which, along with the instructions he offered to the Churches, in whose formation he took a prominent part, were designed by the Spirit of God to afford guidance to those who should afterwards, through all generations and in all places, having "first given themselves to the Lord," bind themselves to each other, in the bonds of a holy and visible fellowship.

For the conservation of the interests of the Church of Christ, as a whole, and for each separate portion of it, necessarily confined to certain localities, and limited in numbers—and especially if that Church is to become an agent in the propagation of religious truth and the extension of the Saviour's kingdom—it is essential that there should be some species of organisation and regulated agency, that there may be, not a useless dissipation of energy, but united, and so efficient, action. As in

the physical, so in the moral world : a well-designed and harmonious movement of the whole apparatus, employed to effect a given purpose, is essential to the production of any valuable results. Nothing must be left to chance. Haphazard is a word which does not exist in the vocabulary of nature. There everything is wisely and beautifully arranged by Him who is "wonderful in counsel and excellent in working;" and man must be a humble, earnest, imitator of God.

As in a family, the welfare and comfort of all depend, not only on the regular observance of individual duties by the several members thereof, each one filling his appointed place, but on the orderly concurrent movement of all together—and this requires forethought and judicious administration on the part of the heads of the household—so the health, peace, prosperity, and growth, and to a great extent, the spiritual life and usefulness, of a Church depend on the harmonious working of the whole body, as well as of "members in particular." To do this, it is necessary that there should be some attention paid to the arrangement, supervision, and control of the agency by which all the operations are wrought, so that it may best accomplish the end for which it is constituted by Him who is the "God of order, and not of confusion, in all the churches of the saints."

It must be confessed that there has been no lack of experiments in the management of Church affairs. During the last fifteen centuries, with an earnestness and vigour worthy of a nobler and holier object, astute and ambitious men have constructed the most consummately elaborate schemes of ecclesiastical government that can be conceived. Professedly, this has been done for the good of the faithful, and the promotion of religion in the world ; but in reality it has served to rivet the chains of a priestly despotism upon the souls of millions ; fatal, alike, to the interests of men and the advancement of the cause of God, in whose name and under whose supposed sanction all has been done. *Ad maiorem gloriam Dei* has been the watchword, and the presumed justification, of some of the most atrocious deeds the world has ever witnessed.

These systems, with all their minute and wide-spreading ramifications, would excite not only the wonder of all who consider them, because of their boldness and skilful adaptation to certain ends, but admiration also, if men were not startled and shocked by their heaven-defying audacity—their utter disregard of all great moral obligations. So that one is not surprised that ecclesiasticism has become a by-word and a hissing, has been regarded as another name for spiritual tyranny ; and that all organisations, even of the simplest order, have been looked on with suspicion, if not with dislike. By some they are believed to be inherently evil, and even if they bear upon their front the evidence of a

transparent simplicity, not the less ready are these objectors to repudiate them. The consequence of this dislike has been that, in some instances, happily not many, a species of lawlessness, or indifference in relation to external religious matters, has crept in, which necessarily generates disorder, everyone, like ancient Israel, being inclined to do "that which is right in his own eyes."

But surely organisation, for a confessedly good object, is not to be condemned because it has been abused. In political, civil, and social life, it is acknowledged as a power, and used vigorously and effectively. Why should it be otherwise in ecclesiastical life? That it has been turned from its legitimate purpose, in connection with the Church of Christ, and prostituted to unworthy ends, is not a reason for its abandonment; but rather that attempts should be made to reconstruct Church Administration on a surer basis, and bring it back to its more primitive, that is, to its simpler condition, in harmony with the normal idea of its Divine Founder. Now we have not far to look in order to discover what that idea really is.

There are certain instincts and habits common to men, and which are older than any Church. These, as well as the express teachings and practice of the Master and His disciples, lead those who have embraced the doctrines of the Gospel to enter into associations, in which mutual obligations are voluntarily contracted, that bind them together in a visible union, and are likely to be helpful to each other's piety and spiritual growth. Here is a Church, "a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

In the pages of the New Testament we have evidence of the existence of many such separate Churches in divers places—all one in Christ—one in heart, and in their attachment to the great truths of religion; but under no ecclesiastical obligations to any human head, or amenable to any united body, apart from themselves; "owing no man anything, but to love one another;" "being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ." How such Churches should regulate their affairs must be a matter of importance, because there are momentous interests confided to their care, and a great work was confessedly committed to them for accomplishment.

If on this matter of Church Administration the Word of God had been utterly silent; neither gave distinct instructions for specific action, nor afforded opportunity for fair inferences, Nonconformists would have most seriously to consider whether they were quite right in ignoring existing organisations which bear unquestionable marks of antiquity, and with which the names of some "of whom the world was not worthy,"

have been identified ; whether it was not a species of presumption to stand aloof from those who, in many ways, have done good service to the cause of truth and righteousness. But, happily, we are not left to the teachings of merely sagacious, creative, and yet uninspired minds. "We have a more sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place," and dark, indeed, have been many of the secret chambers of ecclesiasticism. "Holy Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable," not only for doctrine, but "for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," in right-doing, "that the Church, as well as the man of God, may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

We gladly turn from the writings of fallible men, contradicting one another, and sometimes self-contradictory, to this Divine statute-book, which instructs us in "all things that pertain to life and godliness." To be obedient to its teachings, to learn from its examples, are primary and ever-pressing obligations. The history of the early Church, when it was under apostolic direction, describes the course that was pursued under certain circumstances. In some cases great general principles of action only were laid down for guidance, broad and deep, and wonderfully comprehensive ; in others, minute details were given. Along with plain directions there are some practical illustrations presented, forming an accumulation of valuable experiences, that materially help us in our attempts to carry out the evident design of Christ. How the first converts acted we can easily ascertain, and we have a right to infer that, in similar circumstances, we cannot do wrong closely to imitate them.

We therefore fall back upon their writings, and a thoughtful and careful perusal thereof will supply, we believe, all the instruction that is required. We are taught by it how our intercourse with each other is to be carried on, the spirit in which true Christian liberty is to be exercised, and the principles that are to influence us, and underlie all our dealings with kindred associations. To ignore, or to act in defiance of these teachings, is to commit treason against Him whose alone right it is to reign, and give the laws by which His subjects are to be governed.

Turning from the complicated machinery of most of the ecclesiastical arrangements of the professing Church to the simple instructions of the Bible, is like leaving the hot, heavy atmosphere of a conservatory for the cool, pure breath of early morn.

"Oh ! how unlike the complex works of man,
Is Heaven's own artless, unencumbered plan."

The officers of a Church are few, and the duties assigned to them

plain. Bishops (or elders) and deacons seem to exhaust the catalogue of such apostolic appointments as were designed to be perpetual, and concerning which instructions are given to Timothy and Titus. The Apostles themselves, from the very nature of the qualifications (Acts i. 21, 22), for the apostolic office could have no successors; but elders were to be ordained in every Church (Acts xiv. 23); and the necessities of each congregation would speedily lead to the choice of deacons, even if such an appointment were not simultaneous with that of pastors and teachers. In the letter addressed to the first Church founded in Europe, at Philippi, they are expressly included in the salutation of Paul, as forming the official representatives of the people. We may fairly conclude that that initiatory transaction for the management of Church matters, other than the preaching of the Gospel, was adopted or recommended by the Apostles, wherever they founded a society; as the qualifications for the office of a deacon, and the duties assigned to such a helper to the minister, are matters specifically and faithfully dwelt upon. As with the first men called to fill that post, of whom we have an account in Acts vi., all who held similar appointments would be required to attend to the more secular affairs of the Church, and especially to minister to the necessities of the poor of Christ's flock, who in that day required to be specifically cared for; as Jewish bigotry, in the one case, and pagan hostility in the other, would most probably lead to a heartless abandonment of the converts, on the part of friends and relatives. Ministers could not consistently with their sacred functions "leave the Word of God, and serve tables."

So the people had to "look out men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom, who might be appointed over the business, while they gave themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word;" and such were found.

The natural course is to select those who are of some standing in the Church. "Let these always first be proved, then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless;" elder in years, without being too old for active service; who have had some experience in worldly matters, which may prove helpful in religious affairs, and who are presumed to be capable and willing to undertake these duties.

No Church, however small, can well be without such officers, call them by what name we may. While the spiritual edification and advancement of a people require most, if not all, the thought and time of their teacher, the good order of the Church requires the services of some responsible persons, to whom the rest are to look for methodical arrangements and action. What is, in one sense, the duty of every member, "to seek the good of Jerusalem all the days of his life," will be especially obligatory on selected and accountable persons. There

must ever be danger of drifting into a perilous, or at any rate mischievous, position, when everybody's business in general is nobody's in particular. A commander-in-chief must have his staff of officers, however small his army may be, or his directions are not likely to be very effectively carried out. The issue of the battle may depend as much upon his having faithful coadjutors immediately around him, whom he may consult, on whose knowledge and judgment he may be able to rely, and who are ready to receive his directions, and convey them to different parts of the field, as on the rank and file who ultimately carry out his orders.

The wisdom of a division of labour is a well-known fact in modern social life. It is universally recognised as necessary for the efficient working of the social machine. So it is equally necessary for the working of the ecclesiastical apparatus of any religious community, great or small.

I propose, in two or three brief papers, to consider how this may be most efficiently done in our Congregational Churches ; and shall advert to several practical points relating to the conduct of such matters as pertain to Church life, in the observance of the duties arising from the mutual relationship and intercourse of officers and members ; and offer such hints as experience and observation suggest ; calculated, I hope, to secure the comfort both of minister and people, to promote the edification and usefulness of the Church, and to advance the honour of the Great Master, "whose we are and whom we serve."

Kingsland.

T. W. AVELING, D.D.



THE WALK ON THE WATERS.

ABOVE the hills of Western Galilee
The Paschal moon, half-orb'd, through rifts of cloud,
Flings on the Lake a wavering train of light.

Down through a grassy glen, from those green slopes
Which skirt the eastern shore, where Jordan sends
(Fresh fed with snow from Hermon) eagerly
Its ice-cold current through the Lake's deep heart,
A troop of manly forms by twos and threes
Emerges in the moonlight on the beach.
Twelve men, all told : some sinewy, lithe, and brown,
As bred to sport and strife with wind and wave ;
Others of sparer mould and stiller mood ;
But all of that ripe age when manhood wears
Youth's likeness still in well-knit frame, free step,

Unwrinkled forehead, and keen fearless eye ;—
 Plain-drest, brave, honest, thoughtful-looking men.
 Their boat, beach'd on the sand, with practised skill
 They launch ; set up the mast and hoist the sail,
 Which flaps heavily in the rising wind.
 With doubtful gaze they eye the darkening west
 Where o'er the hills the half-orb'd moon droops low,
 Scarce seen through upward hurrying drifts of cloud.

Darkness and silence fold the hills to rest.

The lights, far twinkling, numberless, that gleam'd
 Along the northern shore, are quench'd or hid.
 The west wind smites the Lake in wild quick flaws.
 As if in fear, the swerving vessel cowers ;
 Then feels the helm, the well-known hand obeys,
 And trembling bounds to meet the surf-crown'd wave.

Louder the wind sings, heavier dash the surges.
 Vainly from north to south, from south to north,
 They shift their course : what on one tack they gain,
 Or seem to gain, as speedily is lost ;
 Though skill'd and bold and strong the pilot's hand.
 Anon, with few brief words of counsel, down
 They haul the sail, and stow the useless mast.
 As quick, four long stout oars on either side
 Bend quivering to the tug of strenuous arms,
 Dipping, in even time, now high in foam,
 Now in the gloomy hollow of the wave.

Patiently, silently, as men inured

To perilous toil, they slowly win, each hour,
 Some furlongs in their battle with the storm,
 Through the deep darkness of that starless night.
 The wind, they say, will fall at dawn, and dawn
 Can surely not be distant. The fourth watch
 By this is creeping midway on. Meanwhile
 One doubt, one dumb dull doubt is troubling more
 Than darkness, toil, or danger, those brave hearts.
 Each knows his fellow feels it, yet no tongue
 Gives the disloyal question words : " Oh why,
 As careless of our lives, or ignorant
 Of peril imminent and fruitless toil,
 Did HE—Our Master—send us from His side
 On this wild voyage ? Once He still'd the storm
 And chid our fears as faithless, though the waves
 Brake o'er the side of our high sinking ship.

But then we had Him with us, though asleep.
Now, who can tell in what wild glen He prays,
Or in what cavern shelters from the storm,
Or if our eyes shall ever see His face,
Or ear shall ever hear His voice again?"

Manfully as they fight the storm without,
Each battles with the stormy doubts within,
Pulls at his oar, and watches for the dawn.

Almost unmark'd, ev'n by those watching eyes,
A pale grey light steals underneath the mist
Which wraps the hills down to the water's edge.
The surges shimmer with a ghostly white
Against the trembling darkness of the waves.
Look! look! on the dim summit of a wave,
What spectre rises, like a form of mist?
A human form where living man ne'er found
Footing, upon the tempest-haunted deep!
'Tis lost among the waves! 'Tis there again!
Pull! Pull! Oh horror! Now the ghastly Thing
Draws nearer—nearer,—making for the ship.
A certain presage of impending death!
One shout of terror; and then fear itself
Holds their lips dumb, and palsies each strong arm.

Nearer, and in the faintly growing light
More clearly seen, the Phantom walks the waves.
Then, through the tumult of the storm, a voice
Rings through their ears and hearts; gentle yet clear,—
The voice which demons dread, and death obeys,—
The voice of JESUS: "FEAR NOT—IT IS I."
As though some hideous spell broke suddenly,
Terror and doubt are gone. Let the storm rave!
Danger, toil, darkness, now are things to smile at.
Faith seeks some sterner test, some nobler task.
To breast the waves were easy; nay to walk,
In faith's strong might, to meet Him on His way.
"If it be Thou, Lord, bid me come to Thee!"
"Come!" the voice answers. Pausing in mid-sweep,
The wind some moments holds its breath in awe,
While Simon, bidding Andrew take the helm,
Leaps lightly o'er the vessel's side. And lo!
The heaving wave is solid to his tread.
His feet divide the foam, but sink no more
Than yields him foothold on the sliding slope.

Joy, pride, amazement, swell his beating heart.
 He walks, to meet his Lord, where mortal foot
 Ne'er trod, nor shall till seas give up their dead.
 The lull is past. The gale, with fury unpent,
 Lifts high the curling foam. In the deep trough
 Sepulchral gloom is round his feet ; nor sight
 Of Jesus cheers his eyes, nor voice his ears,
 Alone in that black wilderness of waves.
 As though some demon clutch'd him from beneath,
 With icy grasp, chill terror drags him down.
 One piercing cry, half-choked, breaks from his lips :—
 "Lord ! Save ! I perish !" Quicker than the cry,
 Ere yet the wave goes o'er his head, a Hand
 Has caught and raised him. Then the Voice again
 Thrills through his heart : "O thou of little faith !
 Why didst thou doubt ?" Again he firmly treads,
 Fearless though humbled, at his Saviour's side.
 So, in the twilight, they two reach the ship.

The sea grows smooth. The wild wind sighs and sleeps.
 A solemn awe sits on each wondering face,
 A solemn hush on every heart. They kneel
 Adoring at those kingly wave-kiss'd feet ;
 Murmuring "In truth Thou art the Son of God !"
 Swiftly and smoothly now the long oars sweep
 The Lake's untroubled face. The hissing keel
 Slides swiftly on, as conscious of her freight,
 Touching ere long Genesareth's silver sands.
 And lo ! morn smiles along the eastern hills.

E. R. C.

DUTCH PROTESTANTISM.

FEW portions of the earth's surface have had a more marvellous history than the Netherlands, or the now independent monarchies of Holland and Belgium. No inconsiderable part of the district has been reclaimed from the sea, at an enormous expenditure of money, of labour, and of care. Some of the most decisive battles of modern times, from Sedan and Waterloo downwards, have been fought in or close to the Netherlands. Here the Reformation gained some of its most signal successes, and also endured some of its most bloody persecutions. And here, to use the eloquent words of Motley, "from the band-breadth of territory called the province of Holland, rises a power which

wages eighty years' warfare with the most potent empire upon earth, and which during the progress of the struggle, becoming itself a mighty State, and binding about its own slender form a zone of the richest possessions of earth from pole to tropic, finally dictates its decrees to the Empire of Charles."

But the strangest fact in the history of the Netherlands is the division that has ever existed between the two races inhabiting the district. Known in the earliest times by the names of Batavi and Belgæ, the former being of Teutonic and the latter of Celtic origin, they have continued through all the eighteen centuries, since Cæsar and Tacitus described them, to retain² their several characteristics. Neither the passage of time, nor community of interest, nor the progress of education, has obliterated their occasional peculiarities. The Belgæ were a priest-ridden race in the days of the Druids, and such they continue to be to the present time. The Batavi worshipped the *Allvater* and dispensed with priests, and now the Dutch, their descendants, are a people among whom freedom of thought prevails to a larger extent, perhaps, than in any part of Europe.

Having in a previous article endeavoured to indicate the danger that threatens Belgium from the rapid growth of Ultramontane power there, and the opportunity now offering itself for the evangelisation of the country, it will be our purpose in this paper to describe some of the prominent features of Dutch Protestantism.

The majority of the people are still decidedly Protestant in their sympathies, although of late years Catholicism has been gaining ground, and is now professed by two-fifths of the population. Of the Protestants nine-tenths belong to the Reformed Church, while the remaining tenth is divided into various sections, or Churches, which are worthy of a passing notice, on account of their origin, and because, like the Reformed Church itself, they are all, with one exception—the Christian Reformed or Dissenting Church—paid by the State.*

The Remonstrants are the remnant of the Church founded by Arminius, and are now reduced to twenty-one congregations, among which there prevails much "breadth of thought." The Mennonites, or Dutch Baptists, date back to the beginning of the sixteenth century; but they have gradually abandoned the strict ecclesiastical discipline exercised in their early days. "At present, no Baptist thinks of attempting to exclude anyone from the brotherhood on account of doctrinal differences. Even the two remaining peculiarities of practice—adult baptism and objection to a judicial oath—are only regarded by one section of the Baptists as essential to membership of the brotherhood. Practical

* The State also supports the Catholic and Jewish Churches.

virtue is still the teaching of the Baptists, and they enjoy a high reputation for integrity. The absence of a creed, at first almost an accident, is now their pride and joy; and freedom of conscience has become their favourite motto.* They numbered, in 1869, about 45,000 persons. Then there are the Evangelical Lutherans; but as the differences of doctrine and practice between them and the Reformed Church are slight, we need not refer more particularly to them.

Deep interest attaches to the Reformed Church, not only because it is the Church of the majority, and retains many of its original features, as constituted by the Synod of Dort in 1618, but because it is the theatre of a great theological conflict, conducted by men of much ability, and of which the people are no idle spectators. This strife among theologians has naturally enough led to an ecclesiastical strife, which has roused feelings far from favourable to the cause of true religion.

The Reformed Church of Holland has seen many changes. In the seventeenth century it was a State Church, and paid somewhat heavily for the patronage thus obtained. The civil authorities had large powers of interference, not only in regard to the general government of the Church, but also in regard to the various parishes. The pastors were at the mercy of the "village bailiff," who determined the length of the services, and could inflict a fine if the limit assigned was exceeded. Without the permission of this functionary the pastor could not leave his flock for a day, whether for business or for pleasure. In the stormy period at the close of the last century, when so many institutions were overthrown, the Dutch Reformed Church was completely severed from the State, and though now paid by the State, yet it has for the most part retained the right of self-government.

It is not our purpose to enter into any detailed exposition of the system of Church government; but a few particulars are necessary in order to understand the nature of the conflict now raging within its bounds. All the Reformed churches in any town form but one parish, and the pastors preach at all the churches in turn; but in regard to pastoral work, each minister has his own district. A Church-council, composed of the pastors, with a certain number of elders and deacons, regulates the ecclesiastical affairs of the parish. Since 1867, this council, as well as the pastors, have been directly chosen by the parishioners, or, more strictly, by those who have been examined by a pastor and an elder, and accepted as regular members. The importance of this new ordinance will be apparent as we proceed. Next to the

* The Ecclesiastical Institutions of Holland: a Report presented to the Hibbert Trustees, by P. W. Wicksteed, M.A. Williams and Norgate. 1875.

separate parishes come the *classes*, or the united parishes of the various districts, into which each province of Holland is divided. Each *classis* has its assembly and government, and elects the members of the provincial Church governments. These governments form courts of appeal from the classic government, and to these authorities is also entrusted the duty of examining the candidates in theology after they have passed their examination at the University. The Synod, or highest Church court, is chosen for a year by the courts immediately below it, and consists of twenty-one members, five of whom have no vote, while another is not present unless matters of finance are to be discussed. The Synod has no independent legislative power; but it prepares a law and submits it to the courts below, and should a majority of the provincial Church governments vote in its favour it becomes valid, but not otherwise. Such is a brief and imperfect outline of the constitution, or rather the framework, of the Reformed Church.

With regard to doctrine, the confession of faith of the old Netherland Reformed Church may be said to be even now the standard. This will appear from the formula of subscription that has been in force since 1854, and which is only a modification of *formulae* used since the foundation of the Church. The document is somewhat lengthy, but is interesting as a specimen of a modern form of subscription. The following are the most important sentences: "We—— do hereby declare in all integrity, that in accordance with the fundamental principle of the Christian Church in general, and the Reformed Church in particular, we accept with our whole heart and believe without guile God's Holy Word contained in the Scriptures of the old and new covenant; that it is *our intention and desire faithfully to uphold the spirit and the essence of the doctrine which is embraced in the accepted symbols of uniformity of the Netherland Reformed Church*; that we will therefore preach to the community earnestly and from our hearts, according to our gifts, the whole counsel of God; in particular His grace in Jesus Christ as the only ground of salvation, &c. &c."

Looking simply at the character of this declaration, it might be supposed that orthodoxy reigns supreme in the Reformed Church of Holland. On the contrary, as much or more diversity of thought prevails there as in the other Reformed Churches of the Continent. Indeed, when this form was adopted it was hailed with delight by the leaders of free thought. Such men as Scholten and Pierson deemed it broad enough to allow them to remain in the Church with perfect consistency, although they were even then assailing the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel.

At the commencement of the century, and for many years after, stagnation in doctrine and life was characteristic of most Continental

Churches, and the Reformed Church of Holland was no exception. In a general sense orthodoxy prevailed, though in some quarters certain doctrines were disbelieved; but in the utter absence of all spiritual life this was not thought to be of much consequence. Up to 1830, the Bible was the standard of appeal for orthodox and liberals alike, and even the ultra-liberals acknowledged the supernatural character of Christianity. About 1837, there appeared at Groningen—one of the three Universities of Holland where the future ministers of the Reformed Church are trained—a new school of thought, which gave great prominence to the *person* of Jesus, as the sole source of instruction with regard to the nature of God and man's relation to Him. This introduction of Schleiermacher's doctrine into Holland met with much favour among moderate men of both parties, orthodox and liberal. Greater attention was paid to the New Testament, and especially to the Gospels, and the study of Church history became more common.

Meanwhile, Strauss' "Life of Jesus" was published, and the Tübingen school began to attract attention in Holland. At once rejected by the Groningen party, these new principles of historical criticism found acceptance in the University of Leyden, and in Professor Scholten obtained an earnest and eloquent exponent. This Leyden school, or as it is now called this *modern* school, has many adherents both among the clergy and laity, and in the boldness of its assertions and the recklessness of its negations, it is unsurpassed by any similar school in other parts of Europe. "The religion of the Nazarene Jesus" is its motto; but it would be difficult to say in what its views accord with the teachings of Christ. Miracles are rejected, it being considered as an axiom that everything in the universe proceeds by fixed laws. The absolute sinlessness of Jesus is called in question, and the very being of God is, or must soon come to be, a matter of doubt.

Happily, at the University of Utrecht are to be found some most able defenders of the truth of Evangelical Christianity. Such men as Oosterzee, Doedes, and Beets are no mere expositors of the old confession of faith, but men fully versed in the results of science, and fitted to present the truths of Scripture in a manner adapted to meet the requirements of the present day.

This tripartite division of the Church into orthodox, moderns, and moderates, produces an amount of irritation and conflict most prejudicial to the spread of true religion. Incessantly at war with each other, all parties are in danger of becoming more and more extreme in the view they hold. The modern pushes his negations to the very verge of atheism; the orthodox entrenches himself within the ramparts of a bigoted dogmatism; and the moderate is tempted to regard all questions of doctrine as of very minor importance, and thus to foster a spirit of

religious indifference. The strife, moreover, is not confined to the pastors and the Church-courts. The laity take a very active part in it, and it may be said to have entered even into the family-life of the community.

Happily, the privilege now virtually conceded to the parishes of choosing their own pastors has wrought great changes, for as the majority of the parishioners is in most cases orthodox, almost every vacant pulpit is filled by orthodox or moderate pastors, to the great discomfiture of the moderns. When the minorities are large and influential, they sometimes seek to compensate themselves for the loss they have sustained by the establishment of a lectureship on behalf of the candidate of their choice.

The ruling party in the Church, largely composed of men of the moderate school, view with much disfavour these somewhat drastic measures pursued by the orthodox majorities, and from time to time they propose or promote some scheme of reconciliation. Meanwhile the process of eliminating the moderns goes slowly forward, and if the question of Church property and State support were not involved in this struggle, and if the supply of ministers were only equal to the demand, we might hope that in this natural kind of way the Reformed Church of Holland would gradually be freed from the deadly leaven of rationalism. But the supposed rights with regard to ecclesiastical property form an almost insuperable hindrance to any such settlement of the question, while the decreasing number of young men offering themselves for the ministry constitutes another great difficulty for the Church in Holland, as in many other European lands. It is calculated that nearly two hundred parishes are at the present moment unprovided with pastors, and it is feared that this number will increase from year to year. With a view to supply this want, and to raise up a band of faithful men, the Rev. J. Van Dijk has established a lyceum, where preparatory training is given to young men who are deemed suitable for the pastoral office. After a course of two years they are sent to the University of Utrecht to study theology. Much blessing has already resulted, and it is hoped that in this way many parishes will be provided with earnest and godly pastors. This excellent minister has withdrawn from the ranks of the Reformed Church, but, simply as it would appear, on account of the laxity of doctrine prevailing in its ranks; and his hope is, that by persistent efforts in the training of young men, and by other means, the condition of matters within the Church may be so changed as to render it no longer necessary for him to be a seceder from its ranks. "I am far from despairing," he remarked a few years since, "of the future of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands, for it stands on the triple foundation of the Word of God, its confession of faith, and its historical past." We do not share in M. Van Dijk's confidence, for

the knell of State supported and protected Churches seems to be sounding, and no efforts from without or from within will avail to delay the day of their fall.

For our part, we have much greater faith in the stability and progress of the Christian Reformed Church of Holland, to which Mr. Van Dijk, we believe, once belonged. This Church dates back no further than 1834, when two or three zealous pastors made themselves obnoxious to the Government by the earnestness with which they preached the Gospel, and protested against the relaxation of discipline and doctrine in the Reformed Church. The stand they took, and the arbitrary measures directed against them by the authorities, awakened the sympathy of several young ministers, and of a considerable portion of their people. Another source of discontent was the use of hymns in the services of the church—a usage in opposition to the rule laid down by the Synod of Dort, that only the 150 Psalms of David, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's-Prayer, the Creed, and Mary's, Zacharia's, and Simeon's hymns shall be sung. At length these malcontents withdrew, and formed a Church, which was at first compelled by law to style itself the Separatist Reformed Church, but since 1869 has been allowed to assume the title it now bears—the Christian Reformed Church. At first it met with great opposition. The Government availed itself of an old law forbidding the meeting together of more than twenty persons, and many of the pastors were heavily fined. In 1837 these fines amounted in three provinces alone to 18,183 florins (£1,510). But these troubles have long since ceased, and the Church has been allowed to pursue its quiet but useful course. It consists at present of 350 congregations, with more than 300 ordained ministers, 40,000 communicants, and about 120,000 adherents. It has a theological school at Kampen, attended by 70 students. Its ministers are an earnest and active body of men, and though not altogether emancipated from the narrow views held by the founders of the Church, they are doing a good work in many parts of the country. Strangely enough, they maintain that the State ought to support them, as a compensation for depriving them years ago of certain ecclesiastical property. But this view of matters has not, we believe, been as yet laid before the Government, and we should hope that a larger acquaintance with the real nature of a Christian Church will lead them ere long to see that Voluntaryism—the principle on which they have subsisted and prospered hitherto—is the only true one on which to depend for the maintenance of the Church. Great advantage would, we think, accrue to this and other Continental Churches, if they were brought into closer contact with some of the forms of free religious life existing in this country. We might learn something from the simplicity and

depth of their piety, while they might be led to form broader views of Christian life, and be strengthened in their attachment to that spiritual freedom in which they have been cradled. It seems to us a pity that the Congregational Union of England and Wales does not imitate the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, and seek to enter into relations of sympathy and friendship with the various Free Churches of Europe, such, for example, as this Christian Reformed Church of Holland. Time was when our forefathers, the Robinsons, the Brewsters, the Ainsworths, and others, were glad to find a home and freedom to worship God among Dutch Christians. Such historical associations should endear Holland and its Churches to English Congregationalists.

But to return. This Dissenting Church has been a blessing, not only by the direct good it has accomplished, but also by the influence it has exerted on the Reformed Church. We may indeed say of the Dutch National Church what we say of the National Church of our own country, that it owes much of the activity and religious life now pervading its ranks to the impetus given by the Dissenters, whom it so often despises.

During the last few years progress has been made in all departments of Christian activity. The missionary festivals held annually in different parts of the country, and attended by from 15,000 to 20,000 persons, have done very much to bring Christian people together, and to stimulate their zeal for the cause of God at home and abroad. The late Pastor Heldring, the originator of these monster gatherings, led many to enter on that path of devotedness in which he had so long walked. The Evangelical Alliance Conference, held at Amsterdam in 1867, was also a means of developing much latent Christian power, and since that time the Inner Mission, with its numerous departments, has met with large support. Evangelistic operations of every kind are being carried on. Town missions, tract distribution, open-air preaching, young mens' Christian associations, institutions for the reformation of the criminal classes; in one word, most of the methods adopted in this country and in Germany are being employed, and with encouraging success. The Sunday-school is rapidly becoming an indispensable addition to the machinery of every congregation. In the department of foreign missions our Dutch brethren have long taken an active part. The Netherlands Missionary Society was formed many years ago, and has done good service in Java and Celebes. But when it was found that some of the missionaries sent out were tinged with rationalism, another society sprang up, entitled the Netherlands Missionary Union. Besides these, there is the Utrecht Missionary Society, whose fifteen missionaries are working in New Guinea and some of the neighbouring

islands, and a small society, connected, we believe, with the Dissenting Church, and labouring in Java.

No account of the religious life in Holland would be complete which did not refer to the burning question of National Education. From the beginning of the century the State has taken upon itself the task of providing for the instruction of the people, but has never included religion among the subjects to be taught. It has simply prescribed the "teaching of social and Christian virtues." Up to 1830 little or no objection was raised to this plan, which virtually left the Church to supply the young with religious instruction. But since that period much dissatisfaction has been felt both by Catholics and Protestants, and occasionally the question has been discussed with great earnestness. In 1848 permission was given for the opening of free schools, but at the same time the State pledged itself that sufficient primary instruction should be provided for the whole country. Both Catholics and Protestants have availed themselves of this liberty. In 1861 a society was established by several members of the Reformed Church with a view to promote "national Christian instruction," and by dint of great perseverance it has succeeded in forming two hundred and fifty schools, in which the Christian element largely prevails. The chief supporters of this Society have ever been the ardent partisans of "the Christian State," and the staunch defenders of orthodoxy; and whether we accept or not their peculiar views of the relations that ought to subsist between Church and State, and whether we share or not their opinion that religion must be taught in the primary school or it cannot be taught at all, we must admire the zeal with which they have maintained the society and the sacrifices they have made for its support. Most valiantly have they fought against the indifference of some with regard to the Christian education of the young, and the parsimony of others, who were unwilling to subscribe towards the support of the free schools as well as pay taxes for the national schools.

First and foremost on the roll of the founders of this society stands the name of Groen van Prinsterer, who entered into rest on the 19th of last May, at the ripe age of seventy-five. One of the pleasantest incidents of the great Evangelical Alliance Conference at Amsterdam, in 1867, was the appearance at a morning *sederunt* of this "old man eloquent." An eager crowd pressed round the rostrum when he rose to deliver a brief oration in French. His weak voice and decrepit body seemed even then to indicate that his end was nigh, but the eloquence of his words and the accent of deep conviction with which he spoke on his favourite topic of religious nationality, showed that his mind had lost none of its wonted vigour. Entering Parliament in 1840, M. Groen continued for the long space of thirty-six years to denounce with tongue and with pen,

in words which, whether spoken or written, were truly classic in point or selection and arrangement, those revolutionary principles on which, as he believed, modern States are being built up. He complained that men's rights are urged far more than their duties, that natural reason is taken as a guide in preference to divine revelation, and that the sovereignty of God is entirely disregarded. Such was M. Groen's idea of Revolution, the historical outcome of the *renaissance*, with its pagan notions. For him, the Reformation, that is the Christianity, of the Gospel, involves a political system. "A nation—one at least deserving the name—is not an agglomeration of isolated individuals, but a collective, living, organic, personal being. Its laws, if they are to have vitality, must be at one and the same time the product of its own history, and the expression of its fidelity to the will of God."^{*} In the constant reiteration of these views he met with some sympathy, but with more opposition. Both friends and foes, however, agree in testifying to the nobility of his character, the fervour of his patriotism, and the honesty of his convictions. If he did not succeed in forming a school of politicians, he rendered great service to his country by the publication of the Archives of the House of Orange-Nassau, and by other works. As an historian his name will ever be mentioned along with that of our own Macaulay, and of Motley, the American. M. Groen was one of the last representatives of an era that is fast passing away, but in his steadfastness of purpose, and his devotion to the work to which he believed that God had called him, his life and character will be worthy of the attentive study of this and coming generations.

In concluding this brief and imperfect sketch of Protestantism in Holland, we would again refer to the glorious position to which, through the efforts of William of Orange and his heroic followers, this little country has attained. But the wonderful story, to be understood, must be viewed in the light of Christian truth; for, to quote the words of our Dutch historian, "Our nationality is religious in the full force of the word—our State sprung out of the Reformation. It is a creature of the Gospel in its struggle against an idolatrous worship." And M. Cohen Stuart says: "Religion still continues to be the kernel and marrow of Dutch nationality." Alas! the fine gold has become dim. "The religion of the Nazarene Jesus," proclaimed and accepted by a certain portion of the well-educated part of the community bears no resemblance to the earnest faith and solid creed which constituted the spiritual food of the fathers of the country. Socialism and Jesuitism are undermining the foundations of society in Holland, as in many European lands. Indif-

* Guillaume Groen van Pruisterer. Notice Biographique, par M. Cohen Stuart: Kemink, Utrecht, 1876.

ference to religion, and, as a natural result, "attendance at church is fast decreasing, levity and dissipation are progressing, and the old Dutch character is tending to degenerate. But, on the other hand, there are indubitable prognostics of a better future. There is more conviction, earnestness, and truth now in decided Christians than there was before."* A new activity is manifest in every section of the Evangelical Church. What is wanted, says the writer just quoted, himself a Dutchman, is "more liberty and more truth. We want to have the last ties loosened that still bind State and Church. Only let the love of true liberty live and increase in my dear country, and its standard will be defended. Then Holland, with its glorious history, with its own proper type and special vocation, its good and earnest people, its wealth and colonies, will have its future still." To which patriotic words every true-hearted Christian, and especially every Christian Englishman, will most heartily respond, Amen!

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

THANKS to the weakness, or benevolence, or the returning common sense, of the "aggrieved parishioners," or of Lord Penzance, Mr. Tooth is free, and is master of the situation. His release, coming as it did, was a surprise to the world, but is a triumph for himself. He has simply taken and maintained an attitude of passive resistance, and those who put him into prison have had to thrust him out. It is easy for the *Times* to say, with cynicism characteristic not so much of the journal as of the Erastianism its champions, that "Mr. Tooth was imprisoned for contempt, he has been released with contempt;" but the voice of the country will not endorse the judgment. The promoters of the suit against Mr. Tooth have only succeeded in covering themselves and their cause with ridicule, and in inspiring the Ritualists with fresh confidence in their power to defy the law with impunity. A more melancholy exhibition than that which was made by Lord Penzance, and Mr. Benjamin Shaw, the counsel for the Church Association, in the proceedings for Mr. Tooth's release, has not often been seen in one of our Courts. Is it possible that these eminent lawyers can suppose that their feeble reasonings would have any effect on the public mind, except to convince all whose opinions are worth having that they felt the painfulness of their position, and were simply endeavouring to cover a humiliating retreat? To imprison a clergyman for what in his own view

* M. Cohen Stuart's paper on Holland, read at the New York Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, 1873.

and in that of a large body of ardent enthusiasts, and of not a few whose judgment is entitled to weight, is loyalty to conscience and to God, is a step the gravity of which the "aggrieved parishioners" do not seem at all to have appreciated. Probably it may have appeared to them an act of vigour, which would command the sympathy of all who desire to maintain the authority of the law, or guard the interests of Protestantism in the Establishment. They were evidently unprepared for the effect which the spectacle of a clergyman of unblemished character in gaol for what at worst was only a blind adherence to a theory of spiritual independence, which it is impossible to work out in a National Church, would produce. The result was that they found themselves with a prisoner on their hands, who was exciting sympathy in the hearts of numbers who neither believed in his principles nor recognised his claims to be regarded as a martyr, and now they have put a finishing stroke to all their blunders, by releasing him on grounds which will lead those who care more for liberty than any ecclesiastical interest, indignantly to ask why he was ever imprisoned at all. Nothing could justify the original procedure except absolute necessity, and now it is clear, from the statements both of the Judge and the prosecuting counsel, that there was no necessity at all. The one object of Mr. Tooth's prosecutors, on their own showing, was to obtain possession of St. James's Church, but surely they will not contend that his imprisonment was necessary to that. Indeed, we fail to see how it has even contributed to the end at all. By their own representations, their conduct, which at first was supposed to be necessary to the vindication of the law, is now seen to be a paltry act of persecution, which must tell in favour of those against whom it has been directed.

What is to be the result of all the excitement which has been caused is as yet doubtful. Certainly, if the uncompromising defenders of the Establishment, those who are more anxious for the maintenance of a great national institution, which they are pleased to call a Church, than for the triumph of any particular creed or polity, are somewhat anxious and sensitive at present, they may well be excused, for seldom, if ever, has their favourite system been exposed to such serious peril. If we were disposed to feel sanguine, or if we had not learned from the experience of past agitations, similar in character if not so severe in intensity, we should agree with the *Saturday Review*, which seems to have reached the conclusion that, owing to the folly of the extreme Ritualists on the one hand, and the "judicial blindness" of the authorities on the other, a strain is being put on the system which it will be unable to bear. Of course this is a danger which always menaces any institution which is, as the *Review* says the Establishment is, full of anomalies, and whose safety, therefore, depends upon the willing-

ness of different parties to shut their eyes to a good deal of which they cannot approve, to treat a number of shams and pretences as realities, and perhaps even to help in keeping up what they feel to be a vain show, if not something worse. It may be that the peril, always near, has at last overtaken the Establishment, and that the "Catholic" party, as they call themselves, unable any longer to blind themselves to the fact that, instead of the Establishment being governed according to the principles of the Holy Catholic Church, it is really in subjection to the State, and bound to conform to such laws as Parliament may enact, may resolve to terminate a connection so humiliating, and so opposed to every right for which they have contended. They can do it if they will, for it is certain that the Establishment could not continue to exist if they were forced into secession. Even so advanced a thinker as Mr. Stopford Brooke, and one so little disposed to sympathise with sacerdotal pretension, says in his little book on "Freedom in the Church of England:" "It would be a fatal blow to the comprehensiveness of the Church if the Ritualists were forced to separate from it, and I should feel that the idea of the Church had received its death-blow. Should we drive out the Ritualists, we separate from the Church a body of clergy who represent a much larger variety of religious thought in England than is, I believe, suspected. . . . Their theory of the priesthood we may safely leave to the attrition of English thought: it will not stand it long. The symbolism of the service satisfies a religious want in many people; and if it does so, why should we reject it? We ought to have services to satisfy the hearts of all, else we cease to be comprehensive. . . . I believe we should weaken the Church beyond conception if we banished this party, and strike a blow at the true unity of the Church of England which it could not recover." The six years which have passed since this was written have only served to prove the superficiality and shallowness of the writer's view of the theological tendencies of the Ritualist movement. The "attrition of English thought" has done literally nothing to weaken the sacerdotalism which is its root. The ceremonial has become yet more extravagant, but value is attached to it chiefly as serving to enhance the awe with which the priest is to be regarded, and the sanctity with which his office is to be fenced round. The influence of discussion and public opinion would no doubt tell in a free Church, where the power of the laity was felt, but in an Establishment such as ours, the theory of the priesthood finds a rich soil in which it is sure to grow with a fatal luxuriance. But what is most striking in the passage we have quoted, is the indisposition of the broadest of Churchmen to purge the Church of this leaven, and the strength of his opinion that the separation of the Ritualists means the overthrow of the Establishment. In this he is perfectly right. The tacit compact of

mutual toleration must be maintained by all, or the system must collapse. It is easy to describe the Ritualists as a small party of extreme fanatics or eccentrics, but, even if this be literally true, still they have a moral force far beyond their numerical strength. Moderate High Churchmen cannot easily separate from them, and leave them to their fate, and Broad Churchmen, such as Mr. Stopford Brooke, are conscious that their own status would become very unsafe if the comprehensiveness of the Establishment was further narrowed. In short, this party, whether small or large, holds the life of the State Church in its hands, and it remains to be seen how it will use the power it possesses.

There are some appearances which would dispose us to believe that, whatever be the consequences to the Establishment, the extreme High Churchmen will not abandon the position they have taken up in relation to the action of courts of law. We do not refer only to the resolutions passed by the English Church Union, and to the evident favour with which the idea of Disestablishment was received at their meeting, for that may be attributed to the excitement of the hour, and may pass away with it. There are other facts of a more significant character. Two new associations have been formed during the last month, the one a society of laymen for securing the liberty of the Anglican Church, the other a league composed both of clergy and laity, with the avowed object of separating the Church from the State. Nor is this all. The utterances of individual members of the party are as decided as they are evidently thoughtful and deliberate. The Rev. E. Husband has published a sermon preached at Folkestone, in which Disestablishment is advocated with equal intelligence and force, and that not merely as a remedy for the present distress, but as a necessity to the general well-being of the Church. Mr. Husband quotes from one to whom he refers as one of the most influential leaders, who puts this point with great clearness and strength. The conduct of Bishop Abraham is, if possible, even more suggestive. His name having more than once been mentioned in connection with an English Bishopric, he has written declaring in the most emphatic manner that it would be impossible for him to accept such a position so long as the Church remains in her present condition. This is no empty cry. Bishop Abraham is not only one who might fairly expect such an honour, but he has been expressly designated for it, and there was every probability that, in the event of the Lichfield diocese being divided, he would have been nominated to the new see. The Ritualists have sometimes been taunted with the fact that no bishop has declared on their side. Knowing the proclivities of some of the right reverend prelates, it is strange that this should be so, though it may be questionable whether it is the Ritualists who are open

to reproach on this score. Here, however, is one who says *Nolo episcopari*, on the ground of his sympathy with them. It is a sign of the times, and one which no wise man will ignore.

Perhaps these indications justify our hope. But, though not prone to be unduly sceptical, we still hold our judgment in suspense. We do not doubt the sincerity of the declarations which we hear, but we doubt whether those who make them will be equal to the severe pressure which will be put upon them ; or rather, whether they will be sustained by a sufficient number to make any action they take really effective. Already we fancy we detect some signs of wavering where it might least be anticipated. The *Church Times*, of all teachers in the world, has undertaken to read its friends a lesson on the wisdom of moderation in their ritual: "It will be desirable to make quite sure that, if we are to fight about ritual, we have chosen a position that is really defensible. . . . Though it may be right to stand out stiffly against external usurpation, it does not follow that clergy and laity alike—for there is a lay ritual as well as a clerical one—would act amiss if they would, before assault is made upon them, carefully revise their practice, and give up what is tiresome, unrubrical, uncomely, wrong, or at variance with the canon that 'good ritual is the perfection of common sense.'" This is very sound advice, but we should not have expected it to come from the *Church Times*. It would have been more appropriate in the columns of the *Guardian*, or even of the *Record*. It comes a little too late in the day, and it is doubtful how it may be received ; but it looks very like a sign of weakness, unless, indeed, the intention be to concentrate the whole strength of the party on resistance to Lord Penzance's Court. "What we have got to do now," says this journal, "is to overthrow the judicial interference of 'the unjust.'" But that can only be done by first overthrowing the legislative interference of the same class. It is there that the real grievance lies, if High Churchmen would only admit it. Nonconformists are subject to courts of law, which alone can interpret the conditions on which their property is held ; but Parliament can neither alter their Church government, nor dictate creeds or rubrics to them. That it will ever surrender this power over an Established Church is what only the unreasoning devotees of a theory can believe.

Probably the decision of the Judicial Committee in the Ridsdale Appeal may have an important if not decisive influence on the course of events. If Mr. Ridsdale is successful, then the claim of the priestly party is validated. If, on the other hand, his opponents triumph, it is hard to see how High Churchmen can accept the decision quietly. But it is often the unexpected which occurs, and the Judicial Committee may succeed in preserving peace without sacrificing Protestantism. *Credat Judeus.*

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

The Story of the Scottish Church from the Reformation to the Disruption. By THOMAS M'CRIE, D.D., LL.D. London: Blackie & Son. (Price, 5s. 6d.)

DR. M'CRIE has a great story to tell, and he has the learning and vigour necessary to tell it well. English Congregationalists, as well as Scotch Presbyterians may recall with advantage the heroic times of Calvinism in Scotland; and the story of its declining strength in the last century is not without lessons which we shall do well to take to heart.

The Catacombs of Rome and their Testimony relative to Primitive Christianity. By W. H. WITHROW, M.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton. (Price, 7s. 6d.)

AN extremely interesting and popular work on a very interesting subject. Mr. Withrow gives a careful account of the results of the most recent investigations on the origin of the catacombs; describes their structure; explains the symbols which cover their walls, and illustrates the testimony of the inscriptions to the doctrine, ministry, ceremonial, and general Christian life of the primitive Church. The book is equally attractive and instructive. It is profusely illustrated.

Sunday Mornings with my Flock, or St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians. By JAMES SPENCE, D.D. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price, 7s. 6d.)

The Intercessory Prayer of our Lord. By JAMES SPENCE, D.D. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price, 6s. 6d.)

The second of these two volumes has a pathetic interest. It was prepared for the press during the last few months of the author's life, and has been published since his death by his widow. Both volumes are characterised by devoutness and sound sense. Without any meretricious attractions, Dr. Spence's ministry interested and attracted a considerable congregation of intelligent Christian

people; and these two volumes will be prized by large numbers of the members of his old Church at the Poultry as memorials of a pastor whom they trusted, loved, and honoured.

The Archaeology of Baptism. By WOLFRED NELSON COTE. London: Yates & Alexander.

A VERY handsome book, containing a large amount of curious information concerning baptism, and illustrated with a large number of engravings of ancient baptisteries and fonts. The author is a strong disbeliever in infant baptism, and an equally strong believer in the antiquity of baptism by immersion; but even those who, like ourselves, believe that infant baptism was practised in the primitive Church, and that it was common to administer the rite by affusion, may read the book with interest.

Tables of Ancient Literature and History, B.C. 1500—A.D. 200. By JOHN NICHOL, LL.D. Glasgow: James Maclehose. (Price, 4s. 6d.)

A FEW months ago we noticed Dr. Nichol's "Tables of European Literature and History, A.D. 200—1876," and strongly commended them to our readers. With the present tables is issued a paper containing corrections of some errors which have been discovered in the modern dates. Purchasers should apply to the publishers for a copy of these corrections. The ancient tables are constructed on the same plan as the modern, and are equally useful.

Memorials of David Thomas, B.A. Edited by his Son, H. ARNOLD THOMAS, M.A. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price, 7s. 6d.)

FOR a son to write "memorials" of his father is a very difficult task, and the difficulty is not diminished when the son succeeds his father in the pastorate of a Church which regarded the pastor with boundless love and veneration. But Mr. Thomas has done his work with

perfect success. The "Memorials" are beautiful in their simplicity, affection, reverence, and self-restraint. Ten of David Thomas's sermons are appended, and they show that the power of the great Bristol preacher was derived not merely from his spiritual earnestness, his pathetic tenderness, and the singular charm of his manner, but that there was keen, masculine thought in his sermons which can be put into print and read in solitude. The style is at times very vigorous.

The Temple. By GEORGE HERBERT.
London: W. WELLS GARDNER.
London, 1876. (Price 5s.)

THIS is a *fac-simile* of what the Editor contends was the *first* edition of Herbert's "Temple." It bears on the title-page the date 1633. There is an edition bearing no date, which according to some authorities was issued earlier; but there seems to be good reasons for believing that the dated edition was the first, and that it was printed for private circulation. The old paper, the old type, and the old-fashioned binding are all admirably imitated.

The Ministry of Reconciliation. By the Rev. JOHN BROWN JOHNSTON, D.D.
Glasgow: Govan. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price, 5s.)

A VOLUME of vigorous, masculine sermons; excellent specimens of Scotch preaching.

The Life and Writings of St. John. By JAMES M. MACDONALD. Edited, with an Introduction, by the Very Rev. J. S. HOWSON, D.D., Dean of Chester.
London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price 1s.)

IN this handsome volume an attempt has been made to do for St. John what was done for St. Paul by Messrs. Conybeare and Howson. The story of the Apostle's life is illustrated from contemporary history, and a full account is given of the geography of the countries with which his name is connected. No new translation of the Gospel and Apocalypse and Epistles is attempted, but they are

printed in full, with explanatory notes. So much of the interest of St. Paul's life arises from his travels, that geography has an important place in any account of his work; and the geographical passages in Conybeare and Howson's work were of great value. In relation to St. John, geography is of less consequence. The volume, however, will be interesting to ordinary readers. The maps and engravings are excellent, and Dean Howson's introduction is extremely well done.

A Commentary on the Original Text of the Acts of the Apostles. By HORATIO B. HACKETT, D.D. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co. (Price, 12s. 6d.)

THIS is described on the title-page as "the first complete British edition." The name of the author is well known in this country. The commentary is extremely convenient to consult, and shows learning and good sense. It is an excellent book.

Rowland Hill: His Life, Anecdotes, and Pulpit Sayings. By VERNON J. CHARLESWORTH. With an Introduction by C. H. SPURGEON. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price, 3s. 6d.)

A MOST amusing and interesting book, throwing considerable light on the religious condition of England at the end of the last century and beginning of this, as well as presenting a vivid representation of an eminently good and remarkable man. But what does Mr. Charlesworth mean by saying (page 12) that "religious character" should be made "an indispensable qualification for admission to our national colleges"? This would be a University Test with a vengeance.

The Huguenots: their Settlements, Churches, and Industries in England and Ireland. By SAMUEL SMILES.
London: John Murray. (Price, 7s. 6d.)

THIS is a new and revised edition of a very charming book, and contains a large amount of fresh information. The story which Mr. Smiles has to tell is a very striking one, and he tells it well. It shows how much France lost and how much England gained by the persecution of the Huguenots.

The Congregationalist.

APRIL, 1877.

THE MACCABEES.*

IT is not a little to the credit of the human heart that the mighty men of history in whom it most delights are not kings and conquerors, winners of battles and founders of empires, but righters of wrong and withstanders of oppression, patriots and martyrs, defenders of an invaded land, champions of a noble cause in deadly peril, assertors of a sacred principle grievously slighted or sorely assailed. Vainly have certain writers of our age done their best to preach up conquerors and dress up tyrants—to magnify force and glorify success. Might may in the end become right; but the human heart far more enjoys the process of turning right into might, and deeply sympathises even with the unsuccessful endeavour to effect that conversion. It will not be seduced into the idolatry of enlightened conquerors and vigorous despots, but cleaves to its old heroes and darlings, sticks fast to martyrs and patriots, takes more delight in St. Paul than in Alexander or Cæsar, prefers Harold the Hapless to William the Conqueror, William Wallace to Edward the First, Kosciuszko to Suvaroff, turns with transport to William the Silent from Alva, Farnese, and Philip the Second, and likes William the Third far better than Louis the Fourteenth.

The hapless hero of a noble but hapless cause is dear to us; the triumphant hero of a great and successful cause is delightful to us. But our hearts are most strongly and variously stirred by the fallen champion of a good and victorious cause—by the champion who has died in

* It may be well to state that I have not yet read Dean Stanley's recent volume, and know nothing of his dealings with the Maccabees and their time.—T. H. G.

its defence, and has not yielded up his life in vain. He combines the attractions of the victim and the victor; in him the glory of martyrdom is mingled with the glory of conquest. We at once mourn and rejoice over him. Oswald on the field of Oswestry, vanquished and slain in the defence of English Christianity against the heathen Penda; or Harold on the field of Hastings, vainly fighting and falling for the Fatherland invaded by the Norman, simply saddens us. But Gustavus Adolphus, lying in the arms of victory on the field of Lutzen, the deliverer and the martyr of sorely-imperilled Protestantism, at once casts us down and lifts us up—fills our hearts with triumphant sorrow.

This twofold charm, this twofold glory, signally environs and consecrates the Maccabees—the five valiant brethren who fought and fell in the victorious struggle to preserve the faith and law of Israel from the corrupting and destroying onslaught of Grecian idolatry. If a single victor-victim so possesses the heart and imagination, what power and inspiration dwell in a brotherhood of martyrs and liberators! All the five sons of Mattathias died for the same noble cause, either on the battle-field or by the assassin's hand. Three of them—Judas, Jonathan, and Simon—followed one another in the leadership of the people and in the conduct of the conflict. As one brother fell, another stepped into the place of peril and glory, caught the sacred banner from the drooping hand that had so bravely borne it, held it fast and waved it high. Brother took up the work of brother till the work was done, till Israel was delivered, till the law was cleared of defilement and the faith preserved from extinction.

The Maccabees are hardly so well known and dear to Englishmen as they ought to be. The people are not familiar with them as with the judges and prophets of early Israel. Scholars do not care for them as for the heroes of Greece and Rome. They lack the Biblical and the classical odour. They belong neither to sacred nor to general history. Their connection with Israel holds them apart from the patriots of heathen antiquity; yet they do not keep company with the mighty men of the Old Testament. We do not glow over them as we glow over Leonidas and Thrasylbus, over the Decii and the Gracchi. The atmosphere which surrounds Joshua and Gideon, Jephthah and Samson, Samuel and Elijah, does not environ the Maccabees. They do not belong to the poetic and inspired age of the Chosen people—when Jehovah went forth with His host—when Israel's disobedience sent Him away, and her obedience brought Him back—when the word of the Lord came to His prophets, and His presence shone in the Temple. The records of their exploits occur among the moralities, rhetoric, and romances of the Apocrypha, not among the psalms and prophecies, the sweet and sublime poetry of the Old Testament.

And yet no heroes of Greece and Rome were more heroic than the Maccabees ; no mighty man of early Israel surpassed Judas Maccabeus in might. No deliverer of the Chosen people was ever more clearly raised up by God, or wrought a greater and more wonderful deliverance, than did the five valiant brethren. The epistolizer of the Hebrews does not mention them by name among the champions of Israel made strong by faith ; yet the great things ascribed by him to Barak and Gideon, to Jephthah and Samson, to Samuel and David, were pre-eminently done by the Maccabees. "They subdued kingdoms;" "they wrought righteousness." They did not, it is true, "escape the edge of the sword." But, emphatically, "out of weakness they were made strong;" signally, they "waxed valiant in fight;" over and over again they "turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

In truth, none of the old Judges encountered foes so formidable, or accomplished things so great, as did the sons of Mattathias. They had not to do with Arab emirs and petty tribes, with Moabites and Midianites, with Ammonites and Philistines. They had to grapple with the great monarchy of Macedonian Syria—a monarchy in decline, but still powerful and wealthy : far more powerful than the Syria of Benhadad and Hazael. This kingdom of the Greeks hardly yielded in might to the Assyria which subverted Samaria, or the Babylon which overthrew Jerusalem. Yet no deliverers arose to avert the captivity of Israel and of Judah. The struggle against Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar produced no national champions like those who fought and won the good fight against Antiochus Epiphanes and Demetrius Soter.

All the great empires of the ancient world, except one, laid a heavy hand upon Israel. Egypt vexed her ; first Assyria, and afterward Babylon, led her captive ; Greece or Macedonia sorely oppressed her ; Rome ground her into powder. Persia alone helped and cherished her ; the comparatively unidolatrous Persians dealt tenderly with the Hebrews throughout their connection. Religious sympathy, without doubt, had much to do with these happy relations, just as religious antipathy aggravated the enmity of all the other powers. But in only one case did such antipathy give rise to warfare. Neither Egyptians nor Syrians, neither Assyrians nor Chaldeans fell upon the Hebrews in order to propagate idolatry ; their onslaughts arose from lust of conquest or from political complications. The death-struggle with Rome would not have arisen but for the religious fanaticism of the Jews. Yet the Romans made war to reduce a rebellious province, not to exterminate a hostile faith : they tolerated Judaism after they had crushed Judæa. Macedonian Syria alone drew the sword for the abolition of Israel's law and the destruction of Israel's religion, for the establishment of Grecian idolatry in the stead thereof. And of all these hostile powers, against this one alone did Israel prevail.

Egypt, under Shishak and Necho, invaded her with success ; Assyria overthrew her ; Babylon destroyed her for awhile ; Rome made an end of her as a nation, in the ordinary sense of the word ; while her warfare with the Syrian Greeks not only brought shame and discomfiture to them, but lifted her into a greatness and glory that she had not known for centuries. The Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Chaldeans found her deeply tainted with idolatry, and laid her low ; the Romans fell upon her when Christianity was born, when the true life had gone out of her, and they trampled her under foot. The Hellenised Syrians found her faithful to God's law—still entrusted with the spiritual treasure of the world—and they left her victorious and independent.

The most obscure portion of Hebrew history, when Judæa combined dependence upon Persia with the immediate government of the high-priest, was probably its happiest, and certainly its least disturbed period. We are wont to enjoy the fall of the Persian empire as the overthrow of a worn-out despotism, and to hail the victory of Alexander as a triumph of civilisation and progress. That victory, without doubt, led to the diffusion of Grecian learning and philosophy through the East ; it likewise led to an exaggeration and aggravation of idolatry. The severe simplicity of Persian religion, while it smiled upon the monotheism of Israel, frowned upon the rank idolatry of Egypt and Syria, and drove the superstitious Egyptians into frequent revolt. The Macedonian conquerors were more indulgent. The religion of Alexander was all-embracing. He felt equally at home in the temple of Ammon, the temple of Bel, and the temple of Jehovah. The same spirit dwelt in his successors. The Ptolemies in Egypt, the Seleucidæ in Syria, combined patronage of Hellenic learning with patronage of native superstition. Their courts swarmed with Greek sophists and rhetoricians ; Greek polytheism flourished in the Grecian cities which they erected, in Alexandria and Antioch. The gods of Greece shook hands with the gods of Egypt, Syria, and Babylon, and would fain have made friends with the God of the Jews. Hellenism somewhat affected Judaism, especially in Egypt. But Jehovah would not endure Zeus and Apollo any more than Baal and Moloch. The collision between Hellenic polytheism and Hebrew monotheism was not, however, immediate. For a century after the death of Alexander, Judæa remained an Egyptian dependency, with the high-priest as the head of the nation ; nor did their new masters make any direct onslaught upon the national religion. As in olden time the Pharaohs of Egypt contended with the monarchs of Assyria for supremacy over Israel, so the Syrian Seleucidæ fought with the Egyptian Ptolemies for the possession of Palestine, and at last won it in the reign of Antiochus the Great, the foe of Rome and the host of Hannibal, B.C. 198.

Many things helped to hasten the conflict between Hellenism and Judaism, which at last broke out under his son Antiochus Epiphanes. The Syrian kings, condemned to pay an enormous war indemnity to the victorious Romans, cast greedy eyes upon the Temple-treasury at Jerusalem. Ambitious kinsmen of the high-priest Onias wanted to buy the priesthood from the Syrian monarch, and promised to administer it in conformity with Grecian ideas and Syrian interests. Statesmen, bent upon strengthening the somewhat enfeebled monarchy by the fusion of all its subjects into one homogenous mass, sought to turn the Jews into good Syrians, to abolish the social customs and religious rites which kept them apart from the rest of the community, to break down the separating wall of the Mosaic law, to assimilate Hebrew worship to heathen worship, and to bring Jehovah into partnership with Zeus and Dionysus. Accomplished and scheming Greeks wanted to introduce the light and breadth of Hellenic civilisation into the dark and narrow places of Judaism.

Recreant Hebrews began the process of assimilation. Jason, who purchased the high-priesthood from which he ousted his brother Onias, did his best to pervert priests and people : inculcated neglect of the law and slackness in the Temple service ; set up a gymnasium ; introduced Grecian customs, Grecian games, Grecian fashions of dress. Outbidden and expelled from the high-priesthood by an almost baser rival, he attempted to regain the office by violence. Jerusalem was filled with uproar and stained with blood. Taking or purposely mistaking these disturbances for a revolt against his authority, Antiochus marched upon Jerusalem with a great army, stormed the city, slaughtered the citizens, profaned and plundered the Temple, built a fortress, and left a heathen garrison on Mount Zion. Pillage and massacre were preludes to a direct, systematic, and savage onslaught on the faith of Israel. The Temple service was stopped ; the daily sacrifice was prohibited ; the solemn festivals were abolished. To keep the Sabbath became a capital crime. Circumcision was forbidden under penalty of death. The Temple of Jehovah became the temple of Olympian Jove. Unclean beasts were sacrificed to idols on the altar of the Lord. The feast of Bacchus profaned the holy city ; scrupulous Hebrews were forced to walk in processions as ivy-crowned Bacchanals. The books of the law were burned. Idol altars were set up in the cities of Judæa, and agents were employed to persuade or compel the people to offer sacrifice thereon. A terrible persecution raged throughout the land : the observance of the law was visited with torture and death. (B.C. 167).*

* 1 Maccabees i., 2 Maccabees iv. v. vi. I have based my narrative on the distinctly historical first Book of the Maccabees, taking now and then an illustration of manners and customs from the somewhat fabulous second Book.

Religious Latitudinarians and vehement votaries of culture in our day may prefer Hellenism to Judaism; may with Tacitus look upon Antiochus and his advisers as representatives of progress and civilisation; may regard their onslaught upon the Jewish law as a work worthy of statesmen and philosophers, and may despise the champions of that law as narrow and benighted bigots.* But every believer in spiritual truth, every earnest Christian, every true friend of humanity, especially every holder of Puritan convictions and traditions, will greatly rejoice that there were found Hebrews who deemed the maintenance of their law the most sacred of all duties, and were ready to suffer and die in its defence. That law still represented the best religion and the purest worship then known among men: it sheltered the great spiritual treasure of the world. Within it Christianity lay enfolded. Judaism, far from having fulfilled itself, had its chief work to do, its best gift yet to give; while Hellenism had not a single good thing in store for mankind. Well was it for the world that the law, in this its hour of peril, was loved unto the death—that it commanded champions and inspired martyrs.

Multitudes died in torments rather than worship idols and forsake the covenant of their fathers. The persecution raged most fiercely in Jerusalem; but throughout the land idolatry was enjoined and disobedience was punished. An officer of King Antiochus came to Modin, set up an idol-altar there, and invited the inhabitants to sacrifice thereon. He was especially urgent with the chief man of the place, Mattathias, an old priest with many children and much reputation, mourning over the plight of his country and zealously devoted to the law. The steadfast old man not only disdained compliance, but when a Jew drew near to worship the idol, fell upon the apostate and slew him, killed the Syrian seducer, pulled down the altar, called upon all those who loved the law of the Lord to follow him, and with his five sons, Simon, Judas, Jonathan, John, and Eleazar, betook himself to the mountains. There he was joined by other patriotic Hebrews, and his family soon swelled into a formidable band of warriors, who went about breaking images, smiting oppressors, frightening apostates, and vindicating the law. The aged champion soon died. With his latest breath he bade his children be of good hope and cheer, charged them to do valiantly for the sacred cause, and bequeathed the leadership to his third son, the mighty

* The oppressor of Israel thus figures in the pages of Tacitus: "King Antiochus, who endeavoured to put away superstition and impart Grecian customs, failed in the attempt to improve this most repulsive race, through the hindrance of the Parthian war:—"Rex Antiochus demere superstitionem et mores Græcorum dare adnixus, quominus teterrimam gentem in melius mutaret, Parthorum bello prohibitus est." (*Historiæ*, l. 5, c. 8.)

Judas Maccabeus. History records no nobler death-bed than that of Mattathias, no grander last words than his—that absorption in a great cause, that entire forgetfulness of self in the welfare of his country and the glory of his God; that solemn devotion of his whole race to a sublime service—that handing down of the holy fire from generation to generation.*

It was no mere parental partiality that committed the championship of Israel to Judas Maccabeus. Under that skilful and daring leader the uprising rapidly grew formidable. The little band became a small army. His exploits increased in multitude and magnitude. From breaking down idol-altars, chastising apostate Jews, and surprising Macedonian garrisons, he went on to encounter rulers of provinces and captains of hosts. Apollonius, governor of Cælo-Syria, hastened to put down the insurgents with a large force of heathens and Samaritans. He was overthrown and slain; his sword passed to his conqueror, who wielded it in all his after battles. Another Syrian chief, Seron, undertook the same task, and met with a like overthrow. His great superiority in numbers at first daunted the scanty followers of Maccabeus; but their leader, full of faith in the living God, rebuked their fear, led them against the foe, and won a victory at Bethoron—the very spot where Joshua, more than a thousand years before, had vanquished the Canaanites.†

These successes greatly augmented the strength of the insurrection and exalted the name of its leader. Antiochus himself became alarmed. He saw that the affair had outgrown the repression of provincial governors, and determined to assail the insurgents with the whole power of his kingdom. A large army was gotten together, notwithstanding the low estate of the Syrian treasury. The pecuniary exactions of the Romans troubled Epiphanes no less than the uprising of the Jews. Nicanor and Gorgias, whom he set over the army, undertook to rid him of both his troubles—to put down the rebellious Hebrews, and to satisfy the extortionate Romans by the sale of the captive rebels. The intended sale was proclaimed through the wealthy cities of Syria and Phœnicia. The price was fixed—ninety Jews for a talent, somewhat more than £2 a head; and a multitude of merchants accompanied the heathen host with the purchase-money about them. The numbers and boasting assurance of the foe made the Israelites somewhat faint of heart. But Maccabeus knew no fear, inspired his followers with his own intense faith, and imparted to them his own invincible courage. Everything was done to stir up their religious enthusiasm. They fasted and prayed. The book of the law was laid open. The symbols and

* I Maccabees ii.

† I Maccabees iii.

ornaments of the Hebrew worship were displayed in their midst. Judas awaited the enemy in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, close to Emmaus—that spot so sweet and sacred to the Christian heart. Gorgias, one of the Syrian chiefs, sent a chosen detachment to surprise the Jewish camp by night, and, finding it unoccupied, pursued the supposed fugitives into the mountains. Meanwhile Maccabeus, who had left his camp to attempt the surprisal of the Syrians, fell upon their main body, which he overthrew; and then awaited the return of Gorgias, and vanquished him. The very money meant to buy them into bondage fell into the hands of the victors. Another powerful expedition, under the command of Lysias, the kinsman and chief minister of the king, shared the discomfiture and disgrace which it was meant to repair and avenge.*

These repeated victories enabled the victors to fulfil the chief desire of their hearts, to regain, restore, and purify the desolated and desecrated Temple of Jehovah. It is impossible for us not only distinctly to conceive, but even faintly to imagine the intense sorrow and shame with which the degradation and defilement of their sanctuary filled the hearts of all true Hebrews. This pollution of the holy place not only troubled their religious life, but laid an arrest both on their religious and their national life. It grieved them not only as a triumph of idolatry, but as the visible and violent overthrow of true religion and pure worship. The spectacle of idolatrous rites was painful anywhere and everywhere, but for the one only hand-wrought temple of the one only living God to have become the temple of an idol, was shame unspeakable and woe unutterable. The victors made haste to take away this shame. Their victory had given Jerusalem into their hands. As they went up Mount Sion, they were filled with grief at the sight of the desolated and desecrated sanctuary, with its blackened walls and gates, its rifled chambers, its ruined and grass-grown courts, its polluted altars. They rent their clothes, they cast themselves on the ground, they cried to heaven in bitterness of soul. Judas at once set about the work of restoration and purification. The building was cleansed; the breaches were repaired, the altar of burnt offering whereon unclean beasts had been immolated to Olympian Jove, was taken down, the stones were removed out of the holy place. A new altar was made, and new vessels were provided. The front of the Temple was decked with golden crowns and shields. Just three years after the pollution of the great altar by idol offerings, sacrifice was offered to Jehovah on the new altar (B.C. 164). With exceeding joy and gladness, with harping of harps and singing of hymns, was the purified sanctuary dedicated to the Lord.† The festival was prolonged for eight days, and was solemnly added for perpetual obser-

* 1 Maccabees iii. iv., 2 Maccabees viii.

† 1 Maccabees iv., 2 Maccabees x.

vances to the three great festivals of the Jewish year. As the feast of Passover kept alive every spring the remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt, as the feast of Pentecost bore witness every summer to the law-giving at Sinai, as the feast of Tabernacles reminded the people every autumn of the wandering in the wilderness; so the Feast of Dedication brightened every winter with the commemoration of the purified Temple and the emancipated nation, of the overthrow of the idolatrous oppressors, and the mighty deeds of Judas Maccabeus. Our Lord showed His true patriotism by attending every great festival of Israel, and has hallowed for every Christian heart the winter feast of Dedication, by the wonderful words which He spoke thereat concerning His union with His people, and His oneness with His Father.*

The day whereon the purified sanctuary was dedicated anew to the worship of Jehovah, was doubtlessly the most gladsome and glorious day in the life of Maccabeus. But his work was not yet done; he had still much to achieve, and to endure. Relieved for a brief while from the weight of the Syrian armies, he had to do battle with the Edomites, Ammonites, and other neighbouring tribes who lent their forces to the Macedonian kings, and leagued their gods with the gods of Greece. Ere long the Syrian monarchy again took the field, though not under Epiphanes. About the time of the restoration of the Temple its spoiler and polluter died, after a shameful repulse in his attempt to seize the treasures of a Persian sanctuary. Of all the successors of Alexander in Syria, in Egypt, or in Macedonia, Antiochus Epiphanes remains the most memorable, through his hostile connection with that obscure and despised people, whose faith, expanded into Christianity, has become the religion of civilised mankind. Some enterprising admirer may attempt for this tyrant and oppressor what has recently been attempted for so many unpleasant personages of history, may declare him worthy of his surname, may dress him up as a diffuser of enlightenment and a friend of humanity. Meanwhile our solitary sense of obligation to him, as to every other oppressor, arises from the martyrs whom he immolated and the heroes whom he provoked. As we owe the Gracchi to the Roman oligarchs, and the Christian martyrs to the Roman emperors; as we owe William the Silent to Philip II., Gustavus Vasa to Christian II., Gustavus Adolphus to Ferdinand II., Hampden and Cromwell to Charles I., so we owe the Maccabees to Antiochus Epiphanes.

He was succeeded by his young son Antiochus Eupator, under the guardianship of his kinsman Lysias, who determined to put forth the

* John x. 22—30. The presence of Christ at all the great festivals assumes the feast mentioned in John v. to be the Pentecost.

whole strength of the monarchy for the subjugation of the Jews ; and led into Judæa an army much larger and more elaborately equipped than any hitherto devoted to that enterprise. Effectual resistance in the open field against a host which counted more myriads than Judas reckoned thousands was impossible. He troubled, however, the huge army by sudden and rapid onslaughts. In one of these combats his brother Eleazar cut his way into the midst of the foemen, threw himself beneath the elephant which bore the king, killed the huge beast and was crushed by its fall—thus leading the way along that path of self-devotion even unto the death, trodden in sublime succession by all his brothers. Hard pressed by the immense multitude of the hostile force, Maccabeus withdrew into the citadel on Mount Sion, where he was straitly beleaguered by the Syrian host. The stronghold stubbornly held out. An outbreak in Syria summoned the king and Lysias home, and disposed them to make advances to the Hebrews. Scarcity of provisions inclined the Jews to come to terms. A treaty ensued, which while it respected the religion of Israel and the authority of Judas, recognised the supremacy of the Syrian monarch.*

But Maccabeus had done too much against the Macedonians to remain the peaceful subject of a Macedonian king. The Syrian court still held him in suspicion, while his glory aroused the envy and jealousy of many of his countrymen, who professed attachment to the law in conjunction with devotion to the Grecian dynasty. Alcimus, an aspirant to the high-priesthood, repaired to Demetrius Soter, who had dethroned and put to death his cousin Antiochus Eupator, dwelt upon the disloyalty and turbulence of Judas, solicited the high-priesthood for himself, and requested a Syrian force to support his claim. This request was granted. The presence of a son of Aaron and a reputed adherent to the law with a Macedonian army under Bacchides, seduced some of the tried followers of Maccabeus, and won over many Aositæans, or fervent patriots to the side of Alcimus. Bacchides, however, had not forgotten their former demerits, and rewarded their desertion of Judas with death. These and other excesses called Maccabeus, who would fain have kept the peace, to arms. Another conflict broke out ; another large Syrian army was overthrown ; another Syrian general, Nicanor, was slain. During the brief lull which followed this success, Judas made advances to the Romans, fresh from the conquest of Macedonia, and in the fulness of their strength ; and they in conformity with their constant policy of encouraging the disaffected subjects of those powers which they wished to bring or keep low, received these advances favourably.†

* 1 Maccabees vi., 2 Maccabees xi. † 1 Maccabees vii. viii., 2 Maccabees xv.

But Rome was not near enough to lend immediate help ; and immediate help was sorely needed. After the defeat and death of Nicanor, Demetrius sent the claimant of the high-priesthood, Alcimus, into Palestine with another large army under Bacchides. Either from the lukewarmness or the exhaustion of his countrymen, or from the power of the party favourable to Alcimus, Judas had only 3,000 men wherewith to withstand the 22,000 of Bacchides. Most of his followers shrank from the unequal encounter and forsook their leader, with whom only 800 soldiers remained to engage the Syrian host at Eleasa.

Vainly did his friends dissuade him from battle. Rightly or wrongly, Maccabeus, like Leonidas at Thermopylæ, held it better to die for his country than to flee before the foe. He fell fiercely upon the right wing of Bacchides, and drove it back ; but the left wing closed upon him from behind, and after a hard fight Judas and most of his followers fell (B.C. 160). The lively and intense faith which filled his soul and inspired all his deeds, forbids us to conclude that he threw away his life in despair of his country's cause. He held in his inmost heart that that cause was the cause of the living God, and knew that it would in the end prevail.*

The deliberate heroism of his death stands in exact harmony with the entire self-forgetfulness and self-devotion which distinguished and ennobled his whole life. He gave himself up to the work without a single ambitious longing, without a single personal reserve. No purer patriot, no more faithful servant of God ever toiled or aspired. In the service itself lay the only reward that he sought and found. His two brothers and successors, Jonathan and Simon, attained to some power and splendour, became highpriests and princes : Maccabeus simply did the work and bore the burden. It is this amazing self-devotion, even more than his marvellous valour and his mighty deeds, that has set him above his noble brethren, and has lifted him so high among the mighty men of history. It is the glory of Judas Maccabeus that inspired the genius of Handel ; it is the example of Judas Maccabeus that has kindled patriots and martyrs to live and die for their country and their God ; it is the name of Judas Maccabeus that liveth for evermore.†

The great leader of Israel had fallen ; his death was soon followed by that of his brother John, taken and slain by the enemy. Two out of the five sons of Mattathias, Jonathan and Simon, still remained ; and

* 1 Maccabees ix.

† Josephus (*Antiquities*, l. 12, c. 10, 11) speaks of Judas as high-priest ; but the writer of the Maccabees never mentions him as such, and makes Jonathan the first high-priest of the family (1 Maccabees x.).

Jonathan rose up to lead the people in the stead of Judas. His steadfast efforts to uphold the good cause in the distracted land were greatly furthered by the civil wars that rent the Syrian kingdom. Alexander Balas, who called himself the son of Antiochus Epiphanes, sought to dethrone his cousin Demetrius Soter. The two rivals sought the aid of the Hebrews, and made magnificent offers to Jonathan. The Hebrew leader, mindful of the many evils which Demetrius had brought upon his house and people, declared for Alexander, who ordained him high-priest, sent him a golden crown and a purple robe, and by his help defeated and destroyed Demetrius.

In the year 152 B.C., Jonathan assumed the high-priesthood. The champion and true chief of Israel became her recognised chief. The first place in the nation was meetly filled by the house that had delivered the nation. The victory of Alexander greatly heightened the power and repute of Jonathan, who ruled so well and waxed so strong, that he suffered no decrease of strength or dignity from the speedy overthrow of that prince by Demetrius Nicator, son of Demetrius Soter. He cultivated the connection with Rome; he took advantage of the perpetual dissensions among the Seleucidæ to rid Israel of tribute to Syria, to fortify her capital, enlarge her border, and establish her political independence, and religious security. But the fate of his house pursued him. A Macedonian captain named Tryphon allured him to Ptolemais by friendly professions, imprisoned him there, and afterwards put him to death.*

Simon, the last of the five brothers, stepped into the place of Jonathan, became high-priest and prince of Israel. What true pathos dwells in the simple words that he spoke to the people! "All my brethren are slain for Israel's sake, and I am left alone. Now therefore be it far from me that I should spare mine own life in any time of trouble, for I am no better than my brethren." He laid the remains of Jonathan beside those of Judas and Mattathias at Modin, and reared a noble monument to his father and his brothers. Valiantly, wisely, and well did Simon quit himself. When fighting was to be done, he and his sons fought stoutly and successfully; but happily he was not called upon to do much fighting, so excellently had his fallen brethren done theirs. The plague of war, which had afflicted Judæa for nearly thirty years, ceased from the land. In his time Israel enjoyed peace and prosperity, tended her vines, and reaped her harvests in quietness and security. He sought the good of the people in every way, especially of

* 1 Maccabees ix.—xiii. The year of Jonathan's death is not certainly known; about 145.

those impoverished by the war. He recovered and erected fortresses, upheld the law, and beautified the sanctuary. But the doom of his brethren overtook Simon ; he did not escape the edge of the sword. He was treacherously murdered at a banquet by Ptolemy, an officer whom he had invested with command, and to whom he had given his daughter, but who coveted his power and possessions, B.C. 135.*

So all the five brothers, Eleazar, Judas, John, Jonathan, Simon died in like manner, and for the same cause. If Simon fell not so directly in behalf of Israel as the rest, yet he was slain by a traitor, who invited a Syrian army to give him the government of Judæa, and undo the work of the Maccabees. That work endured. Not in vain had the five valiant brethren lived and died. The son of Simon, John Hyrcanus, through much effort and after some preliminary disasters, not only established the independence of Israel, but raised her to a power and splendour unknown since the days of David and Solomon, conquered and converted Idumæa, subjugated Samaria, and overthrew the temple on Mount Gerizim. His power passed to his posterity. The descendants of Simon to the fourth generation held sway over Israel, combined the priesthood and the principedom. Supplanted by Herod, the Maccabee or Asmonean dynasty allied itself with him, and reappeared in his grandson, the last sovereign of Jewish faith who reigned over the whole of Palestine, that Herod Agrippa who put James to death and Peter into prison ; and the last Jewish king who ruled in any part of the Promised Land, his son Agrippa, who almost yielded to the eloquence of Paul and fully yielded to the power of Rome, inherited the blood of the Maccabees, lineally descended from the patriotic priest of Modin.†

The struggle in which the Maccabees fell and conquered possesses every element of interest and every claim to sympathy. It was a defensive struggle, a just struggle, an unequal struggle, a victorious struggle. It was the warfare of a small and feeble nation against a great and powerful state ; it was the warfare of right against might ; it was provoked by the most wanton oppression ; it was waged in defence of man's most precious rights and most sacred interests, of national life threatened with extinction, of spiritual truth violently assailed by religious falsehood and corruption, of monotheism persecuted by idolatry. It lasted many years, not without variety of fortune ; but it ended happily, in the conversion of right into might, in the preservation

* I Maccabees xiii.—xvi.

† The pedigree runs thus:—Mattathias ; Simon ; John Hyrcanus ; Alexander Jannæus ; Aristobulus ; Alexander ; Mariamne, married Herod the Great ; Aristobulus ; Herod Agrippa ; Agrippa.

of national life, in the victory of persecuted truth. It was conducted by many chiefs, but all of one household; not only by a succession of heroes, but by a succession of heroic brethren, children of the same parents, champions and martyrs of the same cause. It was illustrated by the alliance of fraternal love with heroic virtue, with patriotic and religious self-devotion. Is it not remarkable that the same time produced the two most famous brotherhoods that the world has known, each too a brotherhood of martyrs;—that the Maccabees and the Gracchi were almost exact contemporaries; that the sons of Mattathias belonged to the same age, if not to the same generation, as the sons of Cornelia; that during the same century the championship of the Hebrew nation and that of the Roman people passed from brother to brother; that the Roman tribunes rose up against the Roman oligarchs not long after the Jewish deliverers had risen up against the Syrian idolaters; that Tiberius brought forward his reforms while Simon guided Israel, and fell about the very time when Simon fell; and that the death of Caius was separated by not more than fourteen years from the death of the last of the Maccabees?

This conflict of Israel against Macedonian Syria reminds the historical student of other famous struggles against oppression; of the heroic resistance offered by the Paulicians under Carbeas in the ninth century to the power of the persecuting Byzantine empire; of the victorious warfare waged by the Hussites of Bohemia under Ziska in the fifteenth century, when assailed by the Empire and the Popedom. But it reminds us, above all, of the struggle of the Netherlands against Spain and Rome that signalised the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The likeness between the two conflicts is wonderfully exact. In each case the sovereign of the country sought to destroy its political institutions and extirpate its religious faith. As Grecian polytheism made war upon Hebrew monotheism, so Popish idolatry made war on pure and simple Christianity. Antiochus Epiphanes and Philip II. had precisely the same objects in view; the Hebrews and the Netherlands defended the same sacred cause: both fought in defence of spiritual and political freedom. Each conflict lasted very long, and had many turns of fortune; each conflict ended happily.

But the chief wonder of the parallel has yet to be told. In each conflict the championship of the good cause was undertaken by a heroic brotherhood; each brotherhood was made up of five brethren. Five sons of the priest of Modin, Judas, Eleazar, John, Jonathan, and Simon, led the armies and guided the counsels of Israel; five sons of René of Nassau, William, Henry, Louis, Adolphus, and John, fought the battles and directed the course of the Netherlands. Each brotherhood had one transcendent and conspicuous member: Judas Maccabeus towered above his brethren; William the Silent was supreme among his. All

the five Maccabees fell in the struggle, either on the battle-field or by the assassin's hand; four out of the five princes of Nassau fell in like manner; John alone died a natural death. Each brotherhood lived and died to some purpose. The blood neither of the Maccabee martyrs nor of the Nassau martyrs was poured forth in vain: Israel was delivered and exalted; the Republic of the United Provinces was founded, and became a great and flourishing commonwealth. Each emancipated people found chiefs in the race of its deliverers: the descendants of Simon to the fourth generation bore sway over Israel; the descendants of William the Silent to the third generation guided the United Provinces. The descendants of his brother John now reign there; the present king of the Netherlands represents in the direct male line the last of the five illustrious Nassau brothers.

The happy result of each conflict has far transcended the expectation of the combatants. Every righteous deed effects much more good than the doer meant to effect by it. The blood of every martyr bears far more abundant fruit than the martyr thought that it would. The heroism of the Netherlands, under their Nassau leaders, not only maintained their freedom and preserved their Protestantism, but gave them a vast commerce and a great colonial empire, made their country the seat of learning, the home of free utterance, the refuge-place of the oppressed, enabled another William, of Orange, to accomplish the English Revolution of 1688, bestowed blessings innumerable and inestimable upon mankind. In like manner the heroism of the Maccabees in saving monotheism from the assaults of idolatry, in preserving the Jewish State and Church, in guarding the Hebrew law, not only averted enormous evil, but helped to bring about unbounded and unutterable good; it guarded the spiritual treasure-house of mankind, from which Christianity was to emerge. Had not the five brothers been faithful unto death, had the Temple of Jehovah remained the temple of Olympian Jove, had the peculiar people become a herd of Hellenised Syrians, had the Holy Land been lost in the domain of heathendom, it is hard to say where or how Christianity could have arisen. When gathering together our spiritual benefactors, when setting in long and fair array patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, reformers, the many illustrious champions of the Good Old Cause, we must not overlook the five devoted brethren; we must make ample room for the Maccabees.

THOMAS H. GILL.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

APRIL 1.—“*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*”—1 Cor. xv. 52.

“**I**NCORRUPTIBLE”—“changed ;” these are the emphatic words of this text. The Apostle has just been insisting on the difference between the bodily organisation which we have here and now, and that which we are to have in the future life. The seed, when it is sown, “dies ;” it ceases to exist as a seed, but its life is preserved, and reappears in another and higher form. The plant is essentially the same as the seed from which it springs ; yet how different is the “body” of the plant from the “body” of the seed ! And what a variety of organisation pervades Nature ! Flesh is still flesh, although it takes a different form in beasts and fishes and birds ; light is light, whether it be sunlight, moonlight, or starlight. And so, for man, there is “a natural body” now, and there is “a spiritual body” hereafter. Man is “sown” into this world in a natural body—a body involving weakness, decay, corruption. In this body man dies ; but death does not destroy his personality : he lives on, and reappears in another and higher form ; it “pleaseth God” to give him a spiritual body, powerful, glorious, and “bearing the image of the heavenly” Lord. Thus, in the resurrection-life, the personal identity of the individual is fully preserved, but his bodily organisation is different. For “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption ;” and therefore the dead must “be raised *incorruptible.*”

But here it might be asked, If death is necessary in order to development, what is to become of those who shall happen to be alive on the earth at the time of Christ’s final advent ? In reading the Epistles of the New Testament, we cannot well escape the conclusion that the Christians of the apostolic age were expecting a personal and visible return of Christ in that very generation. And it seems as if Paul himself had shared this expectation, and that, at one period of his

* In the Lessons of the Sunday School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition ; these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble ; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

life, at any rate, he thought it possible, or even probable, that he might himself be alive on the earth at the time of the great consummation. At least, this appears to be the most natural and obvious explanation of the words, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." The "we" of this text may be interpreted by the corresponding passage in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not precede them which are asleep." The law that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," is a universal law. It has no exception. Those who are alive when the great crisis comes, shall be *changed* "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." For—somehow or other, whether through death or by transformation—"this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

It would appear that the Corinthian deniers of the resurrection held the Sadducean doctrine that there is no future life for man. Only on this supposition does there seem to be any cogency in the Apostle's remonstrance, "Then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It was not merely a resurrection of *the body*, but a resurrection of *the dead*, that these men denied. They do not seem to have believed in an "immortality of the soul," apart from any bodily investiture. Neither can the Apostle rest in an immortality which does not include corporeity. He shrinks from disembodiment:—"not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon." According to his conception, human nature is incomplete without a bodily organisation. The mere survival of the soul would not have been, in his view, a perfect redemption from death. Death must be "destroyed"—must be "swallowed up in victory;" and that is accomplished only when human nature stands up again in its entirety, through the "working" of Him who shall "change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory."

Thus our Christian hope includes the "redemption of the body." Whatever obscurity still hangs over the future world (and it must be confessed that the revelations of Scripture on this subject are but partial and fragmentary), we have a well-grounded assurance as to the final destiny of the believer. It is not necessary to insist that the remains which we deposit in the grave are to supply the materials for the resurrection-body. Whatever may be the truth as to an "intermediate state," or whatever may become of the dust of the tomb—the grave has no real "victory" over the man who re-appears in the future world, in all the fulness of his human personality—invested with a spiritual body adapted to his new and higher life. The "hope of glory" is, in some respects, indefinite; "it doth not yet appear what

we shall be." But it is definite enough to sustain our hearts, and to enable us to "comfort one another:" for "we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

APRIL 8.—"*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*"—Rom. x. 9.

Here and there in the New Testament we meet with a single sentence which is an epitome of the Gospel. This text is one of such sentences. Its peculiar form of expression is suggested by the passage which the Apostle has just quoted from the Old Testament. Throughout this section of the Epistle to the Romans, Paul's thoughts are busy with the question of Israel's salvation. His heart is grieved for "his kinsmen according to the flesh." With a "zeal" which is "not according to knowledge," they are "following after righteousness," but failing to "attain to" it. He would fain see them "submit themselves" to God's own method of making the sinful righteous. The "righteousness of faith" is that which God accepts. And this is a righteousness which lies close at hand. Quoting a passage from the Book of Deuteronomy—"The word is nigh thee, in thy *mouth*, and in thy *heart*"—the Apostle applies it to the "word of faith" which he himself preaches—"That if thou shalt confess with thy *mouth* the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine *heart* that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Does Paul, then, mean to say that the mere acceptance and profession of the Christian creed ensure salvation? No; the emphasis which he lays on believing "in the *heart*," shows that he has in view a certain attitude of the whole inner nature towards the risen Christ. The outward "confession" of Jesus as Lord is of no value, unless it is the outcome of an inward faith. Nor is a man "saved" by any mere belief in the resurrection of Jesus as a historic fact, unless this fact exercises some practical influence on his affections, conscience, and will. For, just as we may believe that there is a God, and yet remain ungodly, so we may believe that Christ rose from the dead, and yet remain unchristian. But when a man is inwardly drawn, in trust and loyalty, towards the risen Lord, then he may be said to believe "with his *heart*" in Christ's resurrection. And this is the kind of faith that God "counts for righteousness." This heart-belief brings a man into his right attitude towards God; it places him in vital relationship to "Christ the Righteous;" it contains the germs of all spiritual goodness. Thus it is that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and (this heart-belief being pre-supposed) with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

But although Paul thus emphasises the faith of the heart, this text shows us, at the same time, what importance he attached to a belief in the historic fact of the Resurrection. The "word of faith" which he preached was a word concerning a *risen* Lord. The Saviour whom he proclaimed to the hearts of men was One who had been "declared the Son of God with power, by His resurrection from the dead." Crucified by the Jews as a false Messiah, He was justified and vindicated as "The Christ of God" when He rose from the grave. They "killed the Prince of life," but it "was not possible that He should be holden of death."

Now-a-days, indeed, there are some who tell us that the spiritual and saving power which is inherent in Christian faith is independent of any such belief in the physical resurrection of Jesus. But perhaps these men forget that the adoring reverence with which they themselves regard Jesus Christ, and the faith with which they accept His revelation of God, are in large measure due to the Christian atmosphere in which they have been born and bred—an atmosphere saturated with ideas and feelings that are due to centuries of belief in a Redeemer who rose from the grave. Nor are there lacking indications as to the kind of atmosphere which is naturally generated by a denial of the resurrection of Jesus. When this resurrection is regarded as a myth, the supernatural disappears from Christ's person and history; incarnation is diluted into inspiration; Jesus becomes the son of Joseph and Mary—a prophet specially inspired and divinely commissioned to bless the world by His teaching and example. Then even this conception becomes weakened. Men begin to examine and criticise the lofty words which Jesus is said to have uttered concerning Himself and His claims; His humility grows doubtful; his sinlessness incredible. Then He comes to be regarded as a young Galilean peasant, who *imagined* Himself to be the predicted Messiah—a religious genius who formed a new and spiritual conception of the Messianic kingdom, and endeavoured to carry it out with a fanaticism which we may excuse on account of its nobleness. The doctrine of a "Mediator between God and man" disappears; the revelation of "our Father in heaven" dwindles into the mere teaching of a Jewish enthusiast; and we are told that the highest religion possible to man is to bend with prayerless reverence in the temple of nature before "the unknown and unknowable."

Such ideas as these cannot live in the atmosphere of the Resurrection. No man dare patronise or criticise a *risen* Christ. The Conqueror of death stands before us as our Lord. His resurrection manifestly justifies all His loftiest words concerning Himself; it forbids us to think of Him as a mere prophet of the past; it presents Him to our view as the living and Almighty Saviour, who has a Divine claim on the loving trust and the loyal allegiance of our hearts.

If, then, we would "confess with our mouth Jesus as *Lord*," let us cling to the belief that "God hath raised Him from the dead." But, especially if we would attain to the true "righteousness"—if we would be "saved" from our sins—let us see to it that we are "believing with the *heart*," so that our whole inner nature is under "the power of His resurrection."

APRIL 15.—"*Now when Jesus heard these things, He said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me.*"—Luke xviii. 22.

A wise teacher graduates his instructions according to the capacities of his pupils, and the stage of progress at which they may have arrived. A skilful physician, in prescribing for a patient, may have to take into consideration not only the nature of his disease, but also the special peculiarities of his constitution, temperament, and circumstances.

In the text now before us we have the counsel given by the Lord Jesus to a young and wealthy "ruler"—probably a ruler of the synagogue—who had come asking His advice. We are not to suppose that Christ would have given the same counsel to every one who might have put to Him a similar question, or that He would have made the same demand on every rich man who might have wished to become His disciple. Christ dealt with souls according to their special conditions and needs. Reading this young man at a glance, Christ saw that he did not know himself—that he was altogether unaware of the manner in which his wealth stood between his spirit and God. For him, therefore, the best treatment was, by a decisive test, to reveal to his own soul how much he really cared for the earthly treasure, and how much less than he had imagined was his willingness to make sacrifices for the "life eternal."

We can scarcely be at fault in supposing that this young ruler had hitherto lived "a moral and virtuous life." That he was also what is usually termed a "religious" man may be inferred from the very question which he put to our Lord. When, moreover, we are told that "Jesus, beholding him, loved him," we may conclude that there was much that was amiable and attractive in his character. When we are further told that he came "running" to Jesus, and "kneeled" before Him, we may conjecture that he was a man of somewhat enthusiastic temperament; and perhaps his "Good Master!" indicates a tendency in the direction of an effusive sentimentalism.

At any rate, Christ declines the epithet "Good Master!" when it is uttered in this loose and careless fashion. He seeks, on the very threshold, to arouse the young man to a deeper thoughtfulness. Why

callest thou me good? There is none good but One, that is God." Observe, Christ does not say, "I am not good;" He does not say, "I have my sins to confess, even as other men." No: throughout the whole history of Christ we do not read of His ever acknowledging transgression or shortcoming; and this fact, taken in connection with His manifest holiness and humility, is one of the strongest evidences of His Divine personality. A Christ unrepentant must be a Christ sinless, and therefore a Christ superhuman.

But this young man probably thought that in himself there was a fund of goodness out of which he might proceed to do some "good thing" that would merit "eternal life." And probably, also, he thought of Jesus as a man in whom there was a similar, although doubtless larger, fund of goodness, and who might therefore be able to suggest some difficult task whereby he, with his eager enthusiasm, could climb to the rewards of heaven. Now, Christ was indeed "good" in a far higher sense than this young man had ever dreamed; but His perfection was due to His oneness with God, and therefore He declined the homage which knelt before Him as if He had an independent goodness. God is the only source of good; to keep His commandments is the way to "life."

The ruler replies that he *has* "kept these commandments from his youth up." He too, it seems, is a stranger to penitence. To keep the commandments—that is but a poor affair; what he wants to do is some thing special and arduous, by which he can earn for himself the rewards of heaven. It is thus that a sentimental enthusiasm is often blended with self-complacency. What this young man needs is to be revealed to himself. And so the Great Physician now puts His finger on the weak point of his character. "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." Ah! here was a revelation. He was not so willing, after all, to renounce the earthly for the heavenly treasure. He had been prepared for the difficult, but not for the impossible. And he finds that, in his present state of mind, it *is* impossible for him to give up all his wealth, and follow this "Good Master" whom he had consulted. But meanwhile the "Good Master" has given him the very lesson he needed—a lesson which he was not likely ever to forget, and which may have borne good fruit in after days. "He went away grieved; for he had great possessions." He found that he was leaning more on his riches than he had dreamed. He went away "a sadder, but a wiser man;" and this was, so far, a decided gain.

Now, often it happens that we also are thus ignorant of ourselves, until God, in His providence, puts us to the test. And often also it happens that where we fancy ourselves strong, there precisely are we

tried and found wanting. In imagination we fight our battles beforehand, and, in our self-complacency, win the victory. But, when we come into the thick of the actual conflict, we are not the men we thought ourselves to be. When God takes away our health, we perhaps discover that our faith and hope, which used to seem so bright, were more dependent on our animal spirits than we ever dreamed. It may be that we talk lightly of this world's goods, and sing our hymns about seeking the "heavenly treasure," and finding our "portion" in God. In all this there may be no conscious insincerity; and yet, when it comes to the point—when, in God's Providence, we are actually called to endure the pinch of hardship—we are perhaps not so resigned to the Divine will as we ought to be, and are grieved to find that we are more dependent on this world's comforts and luxuries than we had imagined. It is good for us to be thus revealed to ourselves. Finding that we "lack one thing," we go on to discover that we lack many things; finding that what we deemed easy is even impossible to our own strength, we learn to cast ourselves on Him "with whom all things are possible," and who can enable both rich and poor to "enter into the kingdom of God."

APRIL 22.—"*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*"—Zech. ix. 9.

Here we have a picture of the coming of Messiah the King. The prophet connects this coming with the overthrow of Tyre and Philistia, and the deliverance of Israel from all her oppressors. It is not strange that there is this lack of perspective in the pictures of the Messianic reign, sketched by the ancient prophets. Their faith and hope saw the glories of the coming era; but "it was not for them to know the times or the seasons, which the Father had put in his own power." The prophet was like a man looking across an unfamiliar sea at a fair country on the other side—with its rich pastures and its mountain-ranges lying before him in the sunshine. How wide the intervening sea is, he cannot tell; but it looks as if it might be soon crossed. Then the pasture-lands on the other shore look as if they were lying just at the foot of the hills; whereas there is really a long distance between them. Then the hills, too, seem all to belong to the same mountain-range; whereas, in reality, there are several ranges, each lying behind the other. The prophet, looking across the stormy gulf of Israel's affliction, saw the vision of the future as if it were close at hand. In that landscape, the mountain-peak of the Messianic reign towered above all else; yet it seemed so near, that the pasture lands of deliverance from Assyria or

Persia appeared to lie slumbering at the mountain's base. But although events, which were actually separated by long intervals of time, seemed to the prophet's eye blended together in one bright picture, yet were his hopes abundantly justified. The illusion was only that of distance; what he saw was a reality, not a *mirage*. In due time, the empires and nations which in turn oppressed and harassed Israel all passed away. And, in due time also, the Messiah did come—"just, and endued with salvation"—to establish His kingdom of righteousness on the earth.

This coming King is here represented as entering His capital, seated "on the foal of an ass." We are so familiar with the prediction, and with its literal fulfilment in the Gospel narrative, that we are apt to overlook the strangeness and boldness of the picture. It is true, indeed, that the ass was not, in those days and in Eastern countries, so despised as it is now by ourselves. Still, even in the East, it was not an animal on which a monarch would choose to ride. Messiah, the King, entering His capital on the foal of an ass, was a conception sublime in its very daring. Had the prophet represented Him whose dominion was to be "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," as coming to Zion on the war-horse, with its splendid trappings, every one would have recognised the consistent dignity of the picture. But surely the spiritual insight which could conceive of the Universal King as riding on an ass's colt, and the spiritual courage which could summon Jerusalem to welcome with shouts of joy the advent of *such* a Messiah, must have been inspired by the Spirit of God. Doubtless it was only as a symbol that the picture was originally drawn. The ass, and especially the young ass,—as distinguished from the war-horse, well trained and richly caparisoned,—was an emblem at once of lowliness and peace. The prophet meant to say that the Messiah would come in meekness and humility, and not, as other kings, with worldly pomp and power and pride. And the idea of peace, as well as lowliness, seems to be included in this symbolical picture; for the prophet goes on to say that the "chariot," and the "battle-bow," and the "horse" shall be "cut off," and that the coming King will "speak *peace* to the heathen."

Now, this symbolic prophecy would have been fulfilled in spirit, even although Christ had never entered into Jerusalem "on the ass's colt." The idea of the prophet would still have been realised in the Righteous Saviour—the meek and lowly One—who came in humble guise and outward weakness, to bring "peace on earth," and to establish amongst men the "kingdom of God." But the Lord Jesus, who was, of course, familiar with this old prediction, took special care that it should also be fulfilled even in the letter. And doubtless His purpose in this was not merely to declare that He was the predicted King, but also to manifest the true nature of His kingship. He deliberately endorsed the daring

conception of the old prophet, by the still more daring act of translating it into deed. He *was* a king, but a king who could afford to ride "on the foal of an ass." His was a kingship over the spirits of men. His authority was too majestic to need any of the outward trappings of mere earthly royalty. His claim to allegiance made its divine appeal to the conscience and the heart. The garments of his loving followers were the most appropriate saddle for the "Prince of Peace." It was on their loyal devotion that He would ride forth to the conquest of the world. And His kingdom was to be "extended from sea to sea," not by war and bloodshed,—not by material pomp and force, but by the majestic power of His humility, righteousness, and love, and by the attractive energy of that "salvation" which He came to bring.

APRIL 29.—"*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.*"—John xv. 8.

Christian goodness is the natural outcome of Christian life; and Christian life is dependent on the spiritual relationship subsisting between the Christian and Christ. These are the chief truths expressed in our Lord's allegory of the vine and the branches. And the text now before us shows what importance Christ attached to the practical fruits of true discipleship, especially as a means of glorifying God.

If a man "believes with his heart," then to "confess with his mouth" is both becoming and beneficial. The leaves of a fruitful tree are beautiful; and they also subserve most important uses. But if a tree is persistently barren, then its leaves may even be as an eyesore to the gardener who is looking for fruit. Our Lord has shown, in His parabolic miracle of the cursing of the fig-tree, what is His estimate of a religious profession unaccompanied by any of the genuine "fruits of righteousness." The more pretentious such profession is, the more does it incur His displeasure. It is a peculiarity of the fig-tree that its fruit appears before its leaves; so that Jesus, seeing a fig-tree with leaves, naturally expected to find fruit also. True, "the time of figs was not yet;" but here was a tree which (as it were) *pretended* to be in advance of all the other fig-trees in the neighbourhood. It was even producing its leaves before the others were producing their figs! It was an emblem, therefore, not only of hypocrisy, but of Pharisaism; and so its fate was an emblem of the punishment that comes upon a profession of religion which is both insincere and pretentious.

Our Lord estimates our "discipleship" by its "fruits." But let us not suppose that Christian fruitfulness is limited to Christian work. As "the Father is the Husbandman," the grapes of *this* Vine are for God, as well as for man. And God looks not only at what we do, but also at what we are. "Fruit," in this region, means character, even more than

work. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance." We are, therefore, not to imagine that we prove our discipleship only when we are trying to benefit our neighbours. The "wine" of Christian goodness "cheereth God," as well as man; and God is "glorified" by meekness and patience, as really as by pity and beneficence.

The "glory" of God is the radiance of His nature and character. Whatever manifests the Divine attributes, "glorifies" God. Christ came to glorify His Father on the earth; and this, not merely by His own life and death, but also by making His disciples the organs of His spirit. And so, in order that His Father may be manifested and honoured, Christ wishes His disciples to "bear much fruit." All goodness naturally suggests the thought of God. As the gorgeous hues of the evening sky speak to us of the sun—even though it be invisible—so all human excellence owes its brightness to the Divine radiance. In Christian character and action, men see Christ; and in Christ they see the Father.

If, then, we would bear fruit to the Divine glory, let us see to it that we abide in Christ. This word "abide" is the emphatic word of our Lord's allegory. It is not enough that we *become* disciples; we must also *remain* disciples. We must seek to maintain the attitude and relationship of trust and loyalty towards Christ; we must not resist those spiritual influences by which He is ever seeking to keep us in union and fellowship with Himself. And if we would bear *much* fruit, let us strive to submit ourselves without murmuring to the Divine discipline, remembering that, however sharp the pruning-knife may be, the hand of the "Husbandman" is the hand of a "Father."

Manchester.

T. C. FINLAYSON.

CABS, CABMEN, AND CABMEN'S RESTS.

LOCOMOTION—transit! How much is involved in and clusters round these words. A good road and rapid conveyance are the essential means of, at least, modern civilisation. With true prophetic and, at the same time, philosophical instinct the Hebrew bard caught the idea, when he foretold that many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase. There lie in Central Africa immense tracts of land discovered by Speke, Grant, Livingstone, Cameron, and Stanley, of fabulous vegetable and mineral wealth, practically valueless for want of *roads*. Open a communication between them and the sea-coast, and they are, so to speak, brought close to England. There exists in our various colonies some of the richest soil in the world to be

given away to anyone that will accept the grant, or to be bought at 5s. or 25s. per acre ; but as soon as the road-maker has done his work, some of it cannot be had except at as many pounds per yard. More than once, the discovery of a new and more expeditious route has affected the destinies of whole empires.

What occurs on continents occurs on a smaller scale in towns. As population grows, the town spreads over an ever-widening area, and the need of communication between the centre and outskirts is constantly taxing the resources of the community. Whoever saw a cab, except a stray one, in a village ; or cab-stands in a small town ? But let the village grow into a town, and the town into a city, and then the inevitable cab comes into existence. It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the part a hired vehicle, ever and everywhere at hand, plays in the business of a thriving hive of industry. The omnibus, tram-car, and trains ply or run on main routes, at fixed hours, and between points or stations limited in number ; but the cab goes anywhere, and whenever you wish it. The driver acts the cicerone, and guides as well as conveys a stranger economically and expeditiously through all the intricacies of a great town. The wealthy few alone can keep a carriage, but the hackney-coach system enables persons of the most limited means to hail a cab—which, with the horse, costs £100—to have their ride, husband their strength and time, for a shilling !

England is a land of exotics, and her sons the descendants of invaders, immigrants, and refugees. To turn out all but what is indigenous, would convert the land into forests, swamps, and marshes. All her ornamental trees, her choicest fruits and flowers, her cereals, the materials of her immense textile fabrics, and much else have come, or are being daily imported, from abroad. The first carriage horse came from Antwerp, the first coach that jogged on along the ruts, rather than the streets, of London was brought from Holland, and the first cab was borrowed from Paris.

Before the appearance of coaches Queen Elizabeth used to go through the streets of London on a saddle-horse ;—and what streets they must have been, since down to the end of even the eighteenth century faggots were employed to smooth the way of kings on their way to Westminster on the opening of Parliament. Roads and streets were not, indeed, constructed for wheeled vehicles. The middle of paved streets, even in London, formed a reeking gutter, and foot-paths for pedestrians were not deemed necessary. It is not to be wondered at that with such carriage ways preference was given to walking, but we can scarcely realise the state society was in, when we learn that it was a sure sign of effeminacy for a young man to ride in a carriage. Yet the world moved on, and much else with it. Scarcely thirty years had elapsed after

Queen Elizabeth jolted along in a rickety affair to Westminster, when a Bill was introduced into Parliament to restrain the excessive use of carriages. About the same time west winds wafted tobacco to the coasts of England, and an east wind brought the coach up the Thames ; and it was sometimes a moot point whether tobacco was smuggled into England in a coach, or coaches in a mist of tobacco. At all events men of austere manners were unanimously of the opinion that both were equally pernicious. Down to the close of the reign of James I. the coach was still a luxury of the rich : a hired vehicle had not yet come into existence. In the next reign a seafaring captain conceived the idea of public stands ; and notwithstanding repeated royal proclamations, a hackney coach stand became one of the institutions of the city. After the Great Fire the streets were widened ; improvement followed improvement in the construction of the vehicle. The driver left the saddle, abandoned his short whip and spurs, and took his seat on the box, by the side of which hung a leather bag, containing nails and rope, a hammer and pincers, for repairs on the way.

For two centuries disused gentlemen's carriages, driven by discharged coachmen and licensed for public use, held their own ; and not till after a long struggle against vested interests did the Parisian *cabriolets* appear as cabs in London. At first only twelve were allowed to compete with the coach, but their number gradually increased to 3,593 in 1852, and to some 8,263 in 1875. There are 10,356 licensed drivers.

The first cab was a hooded chaise, constructed to carry two persons and the driver inside. Successive improvements were made. The first provided a seat for the driver by the side of the vehicle ; the second placed him on the roof, while his fare entered through a door at the back. Then came the four-wheeler, then the Clarence or modern car, and, last of all, the once patent Hansom cab. Not long ago it was thought improper for ladies to use this most convenient of all hackney carriages.

The introduction of public vehicles rendered it necessary to improve and widen roads and streets, and an improved carriage way permitted the construction of superior carriages. As towns grew, the proprietor could depend on a steady demand from the continually increasing number of persons who could pay cab hire. And though at the present day a horse is not supposed to be fit for a cab till he is unfit for any other purpose, occasionally cabs and horses may be seen in our large towns in no way inferior to the broughams and horses of the wealthy.

The description given of the hackney driver half a century ago would lead us to suppose that in manners and intelligence he was scarcely superior to the sorry jades he spurred or whipped into a four or five

mile-an-hour speed. Adopting the public service when discharged by private gentlemen for idleness, dishonesty, or drunkenness, under less restraint, more exposed to temptation, and independent of good character as a requisite to livelihood, the whole class were a degraded set of men. Rum in coffee for breakfast, rum in tea at tea-time, and not less than two glasses of rum-and-water at dinner, was the ordinary fare. More than half the weekly wages paid to modern cabmen were then spent daily in eating and drinking. Untutored, uncultured, without modern facilities for self-improvement, forced to practise extortion to get a living; constantly seeing the outside, but never entering the inside of a place of worship; living an out-door life, and excluded from all the ameliorating influences of home and family; serving, for the most part, persons whom he might never have to serve again; belonging to almost the only class overlooked and neglected by the religious and philanthropic; how could the cabman of the past age have been a better man than he was?

To an indiscriminating public the cabmen of the day are as degraded as the old hackney coachmen. This opinion is unjust; it is taken from a part and applied to the whole. A large number of men adopt driving as their calling for life. They are shrewd enough to know their own interests, and are well aware that on civility, industry, and sobriety depends their power to do the best for themselves. Not a few have become proprietors, and drive their own cabs and horses. They do not wander from stand to stand; they have regular customers, and are civil and obliging. Their cabs pass muster on police inspection days, and their horses are never lashed. We know one who never used his whip once in two years and a half. Some of them, in defence of their own interests and class, will send letters to the editors of local newspapers, which do not violate the rules of spelling or grammar; and not a few can deliver a speech in vigorous Saxon-English. Most of this class are sober; some of them put on a Sunday suit, attend church or chapel, and have houses deserving the name of *homes*.

But there is another class, not less disliked by the regular cabmen than by the public whom they abuse and victimise. Their cabs are shabby in appearance, always dirty, and their horses ill-fed and ill-treated. Among them are men who eke out a living in various ways,—taking to driving as an occasional means of livelihood when other desultory occupations fail them. They are substitutes, driving for those who are ill, on a holiday, or resting on a Sunday. Some of them bring out their rickety vehicles after sunset, and take or refuse a fare according as they see a chance of extortion with impunity. They hang about our railway stations, to the injury and annoyance of better men, and prowl our streets in search of victims. Some come on to the stands in the

morning, idle the day through, and at night look out for unprotected females, and make up for lost time by extortionate charges. A year or two ago we were informed that there were in one gaol sixteen convicted felons licensed to drive, and one whose clothes concealed the deserter's brand upon his skin. On one stand two cabs were known to be at the call of the hotly-pressed thief or the midnight burglar. It is from this class that the whole acquire their ill-repute.

It may occur to our readers to ask, how is it that the men of the former class continue in the calling, and how is it that the other are allowed to obtain a license? As to the first the answer is this:—there are among the working classes men who cannot endure a sedentary life and the close atmosphere of shops and factories, or who were not in youth educated to the life of a mechanic. There are others who by nature love the freedom of out-door occupation, or dislike the monotony and restraints of other callings. And lastly, as we were informed by a proprietor, a teetotaler for many years, and who, though twenty-seven years a cab-driver, had never lost a day's work through sickness, there is no situation accessible to working men in which one can so soon and so easily become a master, as that of a licensed cab-driver, if only he "would mind his business and keep out of the public-house, sir!"

As to the other class, the answer is, that the terms of admission—a written recommendation from two householders—are too easy; that the authorities are not strict enough, and that sometimes there is not much to choose between the applicants. The very nature of the calling repels all who have character and qualifications for a higher position in society. What a life is that of a cabman! on the stand or on the road fourteen hours a day for fourteen shillings a week, and the working week consisting of seven days! Some have miles to walk to get to the stand or the yard, and after a wearisome day, miles to walk to reach home. Some rarely see their children except while locked in the arms of sleep. As to meals, they are on a par with labourers, and all whose calling is out of doors and takes them long distances from home, excepting in one respect—the cabman has no certain dinner hour, and, like his horse, must sometimes leave his meal unfinished. Some have their food brought to the stand, and eat their dinner in the cab, sitting on a door-step, or standing in an entry or leaning against a wall; others, reckless about expense, liking their glass, fond of chat, a good fire and comfortable seats, resort to the public-house. Give a cabman a good top-coat, mackintosh, rug, boots, leggings, and warm gloves; yet how comfortless is one day out of every three, even when he is thus armed against the weather! Masons, bricklayers, painters, labourers, are sometimes under shelter, leave off work in rain, frost, and snow—the very times

when the cab is most in request. All classes have or can have the Sunday rest, most workmen have the Saturday half-holiday, though working only nine or ten hours in the day—the cabman has neither. Most men have their evening at home or in public-houses—the cabmen never. Christmas-day, Good Friday, Bank holidays, *St. Mondays* increase the cabmen's toil. Balls, concerts, evening parties, add night to day work. How is it possible that men, to whom any other occupation is open, should assume the badge of a licensed driver?

It may surprise some to learn that cabmen have no fixed income. It is true their wages are twelve or fourteen shillings a week; but, leading such lives, they cannot support themselves and families on this sum. Spending so many hours in the open air, they find substantial food absolutely necessary, and most of them believe strong drink indispensable. Two shillings a day are barely sufficient for a driver, how then are other personal and household expenses met? In the answer to this question lies the cause of both the misconduct of some, and the ill-repute of cabmen as a body. To live they must get by fair means or foul something beyond their wages. Little do the public at large reflect that it is on fourpence added to the shilling fare, or twopence added to the sixteen-penny fare, that the driver depends for an adequate income. The scale of wages is fixed on the knowledge that he will be able at least to double the amount by getting odd pence all the day through. It is easy to see how a class of men underpaid by their employers, and dependent for a part of the necessities, and all the comforts of life on exaction, are trained by the very system to habits of extortion. There are many people that use cabs to whom a penny is something, there are others who think little of an occasional shilling or a florin, but who feel it an annoying tax on their resources when such trifles are multiplied weekly, and that all the year round. Here, then, we have a class who expect or demand something above the legal fare, and another who resent the demand. How is it possible but that there will be haggling as often as the two come into collision? It is anything but agreeable to ride inside in wet weather; what must the effect be on the temper of the driver, who in rain, snow, or sleet has to ride outside; and, when paid, misses the little extra on which part of his livelihood depends? How can the cabman be a good-tempered man? Some of them can be gentlemen in manners, but many they drive are not gentlemen in their treatment of drivers. They are as exacting, rude, and abusive as the lower order of licensed men. Ladies and gentlemen, to spare their own coachmen and horses, and to save their own broughams, and harness, and livery, will in rough weather send for the car or the cab, and yet grudge the small extra which has been morally if not legally earned.

In the downward social, and to some a downward moral course, some are always gravitating to the substrata of society: out of such come cabmen. Misfortune or loss of character induces many to adopt this street life; and the conditions of that life are not conducive to good character. It is wonderful how so many of our fellowmen can adopt the calling, and more wonderful still that so few among them are really bad men.

We have before observed that in no occupation accessible to the unskilled workman is there so fair a prospect of becoming a master as in cab-driving; but we must put in the condition, if fortune is not against him. He must not only be sober and industrious, but he must begin with a robust constitution to be able to accumulate the, to him, large capital required to purchase cab, horses, and harness. While the wages of all classes have risen with the increasing cost of the necessities of life, the licensed driver's wages have been stationary. Horses and their keep are cent. per cent. dearer than they were ten or twenty years ago. A good cab costs £45, a sound horse cannot be had under £25; and two horses are necessary to do the work. With £100 to start with the small proprietor can in time become the owner of a second cab. But there is an occasional smash in crowded streets, or a collision in turning the corner, a stumble in the dark or on a "greasy" road; and then the owner feels the effect of working on insufficient capital. Let the Spring be cold and wet, and influenza and various pulmonary affections and epidemics will in a few months dissipate the gains of years and blast the prospects of life.

It is but recently that this class of the community has engaged the attention and sympathy it deserves. A mission-room is practically inaccessible to men scattered all over the town. Sunday services are uninviting to men who have but one Sunday out of five. A missionary has little influence with men with whom he can converse only on public stands, and some of whom he may not meet with again till after repeated calls. Men who might go to church but for church-goers, and who might rest but for Sunday pleasure-seekers; who might be civil and just but for the very system under which they earn their livelihood, require more and have received less consideration from the religious world than almost any other section of our town population.

About seventeen years ago a Manchester car and omnibus company were allowed to erect sheds, some seventeen in number, for the use of their own servants. They are unsightly, and in construction and accommodation inferior to the "Rests" now known as the *Birmingham* shelters. Without stoves and cooking apparatus, and the property of a trading company, they were not allowed on public stands. One placed on a stand at Salford was removed by order of the Corporation.

In 1859 philanthropists obtained permission to erect plain wooden structures in Edinburgh, and ten years later a member of the Town Council was allowed to build a brick shelter in Liverpool. The plan adopted in the above-named towns is not of universal application. In crowded thoroughfares, such erections are for various reasons objectionable. Open spaces are scarce, large stands occupy sites where land is costly, and traffic so great that fixed structures are practically inadmissible. The simple but happy idea of placing a shelter on wheels on the cab-stand, in size such that any one of them would offer no more obstruction than an additional cab and horse, solved many of the objections and difficulties which beset the scheme. For about two years it was impossible to obtain the desired concession of a site to make the experiment. A first and a second memorial to the Birmingham Town Council were referred to sub-committees, and then shelved. It was contended that cabmen would loiter in the shelter and neglect their work, and that the shelter would harbour bad characters. The construction of the shelters and the good sense of cabmen, have silenced these objections. During the four years they have been in operation no inconvenience to traffic has been felt, and no just complaint has been made against either the shelter or the drivers who use them. It was urged that the bye-laws common to all large towns, to the effect that drivers should not leave their horses on the stand unattended, was absolutely prohibitory. This law is nowhere strictly enforced; but, rigidly interpreted, it would subject cabmen caught in a shelter to a penalty. It was, however, contended that one or two men could attend to several cabs with perfect safety to the public. The Highways Obstruction Acts were then thrown in the way of the promoters of the scheme. The objection was disarmed by reference to the many statues, fountains, &c., which prove that these Acts are more elastic than opponents were willing to admit. At length, in 1871, through the influence of the Mayor, permission to erect a shelter as an experiment was granted, and in 1872 the first shelter took its place by the Town Hall of Birmingham. After six months' trial a second shelter was authorised, and was opened by the Mayor in 1873. The next Mayor paid the whole cost of the third, and from that time all official opposition ceased, and shelter after shelter took its place on the various stands of the town. At the time we write twelve shelters for cabmen, and one for Bath chairmen, are in operation, and two more are ready to leave the builder's yard as soon as the money has been subscribed.

The rapidity with which the movement has been going on over the United Kingdom is due to various causes. The site chosen for the first was particularly fortunate. Strangers visiting the town or passing through it with an hour to while away, of course go to see the Town

Hall. The thousands that flock to the triennial musical festival or to the lectures and conversazione at the Midland Institute, have admired "the lightsome and tastefully glazed box which suddenly made its appearance one morning, like a miniature Aladdin's palace, complete in every detail," and some of them on their return commenced advocating shelters in their own towns. The *Daily Post* had from the very first rendered essential service by editorial notices and by leading articles, and the Town Crier popularised the scheme. The *Globe* and the *British Medical Journal* twitted London on being slow to follow Birmingham. The *British Workman* gave an excellent engraving which attracted universal attention, and was reproduced in the *Montreal Illustrated News*. *Punch* presented his readers with an interior view of the first shelter placed in St. John's Wood, with the apparition of Mrs. Prodgers scattering dismay and confusion among the cabmen. A medical gentleman, on his return to Berlin, wrote for plans and rules with a view to the introduction of the shelter in the capital of the German empire.

For about eighteen months applications from all parts of the United Kingdom for information, plans, and specifications were so numerous, that it was found necessary to prepare a printed statement for the use of correspondents; and now there is scarcely a town of importance in England without a "Birmingham Shelter" for the use of its cabmen. In London, the Society with Lord Shaftesbury for its president has built fifteen shelters, and six or more outside the London radius have been supplied by local committees. Manchester has eight, and Glasgow two. In Dublin, Edinburgh, and Cardiff, in Bath, Bristol, Carlisle, Coventry, Derby, Dudley, Hull, Leeds, Nottingham, Norwich, Oldbury, Plymouth, Stoke, Walsall, and Wolverhampton, one or more shelters are in existence. Plans and information have been sent to Oxford, Scarborough, Warwick, and York. Artists have come to Birmingham to take photographs, and builders to take plans and measurement, for places unknown.

The intention of the Birmingham Town Mission, which has charge of the scheme, has been to make the shelters self-supporting, and since by the payment of a penny a day or sixpence for the seven days in the week, drivers are supplied with coke, gas, and water; a refuge from the storm, a place for rest and social intercourse, a room in which they cook; have their meals in comparative comfort; can dry their clothes; and, by being kept out of publichouse temptations, save, some four shillings, and others, as confessed by themselves, from six to eight shillings a week; it is plain that the charge is no tax upon their resources, but a good investment of their means. With a few exceptions, the drivers pay cheerfully and punctually. In 1875 the

amount subscribed, in 7,196 sixpences, was £179 18s.; in the half-year ending June, 1876, 3,920, or £98.

The increasing number of policemen fined for drunkenness led the authorities to apply for the use of the shelters as places of refreshment for officers on night duty, in the hope of reducing the temptations to which they are exposed. The convenience and safety of the public at large materially depend on the sobriety of the 1,000 cabmen and policemen employed in the town, and should this extension of the usefulness of the shelters answer expectations, no slight boon will have been conferred upon the whole community. From the Birmingham Police returns for 1875, it appears that forty-two drivers had been reprimanded or fined for minor offences, out of whom seventeen were "Shelter men;" and thirty-six had been convicted for drunkenness, of whom eight were "Shelter men." In other words, the minor offences of non-shelter men were fifty per cent higher, and the graver offence of drunkenness seventy-five per cent. higher, than among drivers who use the shelters.

The Cabman's Rest has thus rendered the conditions of life more tolerable to an ever-increasing section of our town population; enabled them to economise the cost of living, which practically amounts to an addition to their income; and, being furnished with a small library of religious works, temperance literature and periodicals inculcating a more rational and humane treatment of dumb animals, it has made it possible for them to cultivate their mental and moral faculties.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION.

II.—DISTRIBUTION OF DIACONAL DUTIES.

THE relation of a pastor to his deacons, and of both classes of officers to a Church, is one somewhat unique in character, and, in several particulars, differs from the ordinary connections formed among men, who have personal ends and temporal advantages only in view. These may be perfectly commendable, even when they are constituted and maintained for the sole purpose of realising pecuniary profit. Human laws and conventional usages generally regulate such organisations; and legal as well as moral enforcements combine to secure certain designed ends. With the minister and deacons of a Church, and their several and united relationships to the members of that Church, the obligation is entirely moral, but is not the less binding and solemn. They have voluntarily and deliberately formed these associations, and their primary desire must be to know how best to discharge the duty which the Church and its Divine Lord and Head expect at their hands.

Of course the pastor, *ex officio*, will preside at all gatherings. Here a young minister needs the grace of "wisdom, profitable to direct," for unless he have great tact, and has well exercised his observing faculties, he may make some mistakes which should be avoided. Perhaps our college lectures on the pastoral office are not all that a student wants for his direction "how to conduct himself in the house of God." The minister with whose Church he has identified himself should afford facilities for his obtaining a few practical hints, by introducing him now and then to his diaconal conferences, as well as urging him to attend Church meetings, for the purpose of seeing how those who are his fathers or elders in the ministry manage their ecclesiastical affairs.

At this point in the consideration of the subject of the duties of deacons, it may be well to observe that while to the whole of that body the general affairs of the Church should constitute an object of deep and constant interest, it will be wise, for the sake of securing a more direct attention to special matters, that there should be a distinct distribution of certain duties.

I. In order, therefore, that diaconal meetings, as well as others, may be conducted in a business-like manner—as should those of any society, religious or secular—it is not only advisable that the pastor preside, but that one of the brethren in council should be appointed, whose duty it shall be to act as secretary, both for the deacons and the Church. By him all subjects of importance, that form the theme of their deliberations, should be minuted; and all decisions, relating to any suggested course of action, carefully recorded.

There should be added to those duties that of attending to the care and safety of all Church documents, such as registers, rolls of members, with the date of their admission, and place of residence, &c.; especially should he be entrusted with the duty of ascertaining from time to time the safety of trust-deeds, and seeing that the allowed minimum of living and acting trustees be not approached, without means being taken to make up their number, under the direction of the Church. Inconvenience and positive harm have been the consequence of the neglect of watchfulness and care of this kind. Some Churches do not even know where their trust-deeds are, others have never been enrolled; some have allowed, through inattention, the whole of the trustees to die out, or remove from the neighbourhood; so that not a single person is to be found who is responsible to the public or to the Church for the very building in which they meet. A case of this kind was brought before me a few days ago. A minister of our denomination having, from curiosity, looked at the trust-deed which was in his possession (I presume it had been confided to him as the only representative of the

Church), found, to his dismay, that every trustee had died. Subsequently to this he discovered that the trust-deed had never been enrolled. He had no rest until he put himself into communication with the Secretary of the County Union in which he lived, in order that such steps might be taken as would secure, for ever, a good and substantial chapel with its schools, all in excellent condition, to the denomination to which it rightfully belonged.

Every Church should, if possible, have a fireproof safe for the custody of such documents; or, as the care of trust-deeds is now a recognised part of the programme of the London Memorial Hall Committee, and a muniment-room is provided in that building, it may be safely confided to official care. To such a species of centralisation—one of watchfulness and precaution for the general good—I apprehend few would be found to object.

Another valuable service which the secretary of the Church may render to the cause of Christ, locally and generally, will be carefully to record in the Church books* matters of interest and importance connected with the progress and growth of any congregation, which, in after days may prove a useful contribution to its history. The facts connected with the origination of a Church, and the erection of a sanctuary and schools, often amidst difficulties at first apparently insuperable, but out of which emancipation has been effected, in a manner the most striking and confirmatory of the belief of the special interposition of the Great King; the amount of monies expended on these objects; efforts for the benefit of outlying neighbourhoods; the choice of a pastor and his entrance upon his work; his removal to another office of labour, or perhaps to his final rest; the numbers that year after year have united with the Church † (not, however, for the sake of public announcements, of which already we have too many in our periodicals and papers); and the removals which take place by death or

* It would be well to keep this record separate from the "Minutes." The minutes, whether of deacons' meetings or of Church meetings, should contain nothing but resolutions actually adopted, and statements placed on record, by the authority of the deacons or of the Church. The minute-book for recording deacons' meetings should, of course, not be the same as that in which Church meetings are recorded.—ED.

† The choice of a pastor, his resignation and his death, would appear as a matter of course in the ordinary Church minutes; but in the "Historical Records" which Dr. Aveling suggests should be kept, and which in time would become very interesting and useful, particulars might be added that could not well be inserted in a Church minute-book. The number of persons received into fellowship during the preceding year, the number dismissed, &c., should, I think, be presented to the Church meeting in a tabulated statement at the beginning of every new year, and it would then appear in the Church minute-book.—ED.

departures to other localities ; meetings—missionary, benevolent, or for some public and patriotic object, attended by persons eminent for position, or character, or service ; the calling forth of gifted members of the Church into the ministry, at home or abroad, and any communications from such when in active service, as show the nature and extent and success of their labours ; the operation of Sunday-schools, and the tokens of the Divine blessing which have rested upon them in the conversion and decision of the young ;—all these, briefly narrated, may prove of the highest value, as they cannot fail to be of the deepest interest, in after years. What striking incidents may take place in the most retired villages, Dr. Waddington has shown in his “*Congregational History* ;” and such records, therefore, as those I have adverted to may prove full of importance to future historians, because mixed up with persons or places that have won a name in the Church or the world.

II. Another deacon should be appointed to record the attendance of members at the Lord's Table, not as if absence from sacramental engagements was the only thing to be noticed, but that the recurrence of such stated services, at intervals of a month, and the continued non-appearance of any member at them, would afford some indication of his ordinary attendance.* This, if found to be irregular, would lead to inquiries, which should in no case be neglected ; and might prevent the further progress of that insidious, drifting process which, especially in large towns, goes on in our Churches, and is so great a source of weakness to them, and of peril to the spiritual health of the offending parties. Often this irregularity leads to withdrawal from public worship altogether ; not unfrequently from a sense of shame at the unjustifiable neglect of religious duties, and from the operation of a moral cowardice which does not like to face rebuke or acknowledge wrong-doing. The cause of this absence is at times the illness of the absentees themselves, or of some members of their families, of which no information has been given to the officers, who are frequently blamed, especially the minister, for not having visited the afflicted ones. By some good people it is almost expected that a pastor should be omniscient, should have a dis-

* In Churches where the pastor cannot personally inquire into reasons for the absence of a member from the Lord's Supper, the name should be handed by the Church secretary to the deacon who lives nearest to him, or who has charge of the district in which he resides, and the reason of absence should be “returned” to the secretary in the course of a week. In one Church that I know, the names of the members in each district are entered in the book of the deacon in charge, and the attendance is marked by the secretary in this book month by month. This book is handed to the deacon a few days after the first Sunday in the month—sometimes on the second Sunday ; and it is his duty to return the book as soon as he can, and to write up the reasons for the absence of all who were away.—ED.

tinct knowledge, not only of the names and residences, but of the ever-changing incidents in the lives of his flock ; and especially should know that they are ill, without the slightest intimation of the fact being conveyed to him, they apparently imagining that he must be as sure to miss them as they would, necessarily, miss him, if he was not found in his usual place ; oblivious of the fact that though it is easy enough for every one to observe his presence or absence, from the prominent position he occupies, it is hardly possible for him to be as observant of every one in return. The absurdity of expecting it, in a congregation numbering hundreds, must be apparent at a glance.

Some Churches—and it would be well if all were to adopt the plan—in order to ensure that the sick may be visited, and to afford opportunity, which the occurrence of any trouble may supply, for a special call, have cards, one of which is given to every member, with a heading, consisting of the first two sentences from James v. 14. With a blank space for the name and residence of the recipient, are printed a few lines, intimating that the sick person desires the fact to be made known to the minister and deacons, whose names and residences are to be found on the card. This the sick friend is requested to send, by post or otherwise, to any one of the officers whose visit is desired ; most naturally, it generally goes to the minister, by whom attention is expected to be given to the individual case. At any rate, the excuse of ignorance cannot then be pleaded ; and the neglect of those so seeking sympathy, counsel, or aid would be a grave violation of the law of Christian brotherhood. I never once knew a complaint to be made that such intimation was disregarded by the person to whom it was sent.

III. One or two of these officers—here “two are better than one”—should be chosen, to whom the care of the buildings should be entrusted—the church, the schools, and the manse, if there be one ;—and it is a very desirable thing, where possible, that such a home for the minister should be provided. It is the only endowment in connection with our places of worship which I think is justifiable. It will be the duty of the brethren specially appointed to this office to see that all things relating to the structures,—their dilapidations, arising from natural decay, or other causes, necessitating repairs and renovations,—are attended to. These must from time to time be supervised, and so kept in order. A speedy discovery of defects, and an instant remedy for them, will ever prove an economical mode of proceeding in public as well as private buildings.

Many things which are more or less connected with the comfort of the worshippers, as well as the stability of the structures, will thus have attention given to them, when it is made the special business of

one or more responsible persons among the officers to give heed thereto. In the not unimportant matters of heating and lighting, and especially of securing good ventilation, they should interpose, instead of its being left to the haphazard mode of action too characteristic of many chapel-keepers, who are frequently found to be mere machines wound up for a certain kind and amount of service, but with no power of self-action and judgment; whose perfunctory performance of what they are told to do is about all that one can dare to hope for from them, and not unfrequently in this they are sadly wanting. Instead of being left to them, the vigilant eye and, if need be, the ready hand of an intelligent deacon will be of immense advantage both to minister and congregation.

I write with grateful recollections on this subject, having had happy experience in these matters; and can testify to the value of such aid disinterestedly, cheerfully, conscientiously, and effectively rendered; so that well-founded complaints, which otherwise and elsewhere are sometimes made, and not without good reason, are very rare, either as to light, or heat, or pure air, or the slovenly appearance of the interior of the house of God, or the neglected condition of its exterior, both of which should be as carefully guarded against as they would be in connection with our own dwellings. "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?"

IV. A deacon should be selected whose province it is to care for the poor, especially for the pensioners of the Church. He will be the treasurer of the sacramental fund, which in every well-regulated Church is separate from all others, and is to be specially devoted to purely benevolent purposes among the "poor, whom ye have always with you." As such he will be the almoner for his fellow-members, ascertaining the circumstances of the more needy portion of the flock of God, whose pasturage is often a very scanty moorland, and giving them the means of access to somewhat more satisfying meadows.*

Such visits as they are able to make, carrying with them the offerings of the Church, especially if the recipients be among the helpless in suffering, and those who are prostrate with disease, will be, to a

* Where the poor are numerous, one deacon will not be able to arrange for their regular relief. In my own Church every deacon in charge of a district is responsible for the poor within its limits, and receives monthly from the treasurer of the Church fund the money necessary to relieve them. In urgent cases the deacons relieve on their own responsibility. In cases which require permanent relief, or relief extending over many months, the amount to be granted is determined by the minister and deacons, on the recommendation of the deacon specially responsible for them. The "cases," as they are called, are always taken immediately after the minutes.—ED.

truly Christian heart, one of the sweetest and purest sources of enjoyment.

There was a ray of joy flung athwart the deep gloom that encircled Job when he could say, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me ; and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me : because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

Lessons the most precious have been learnt, both by deacons and ministers, from some of these hidden ones of God, whose very privations, both with respect to this world's good and to the invigorating and comforting ordinances of the house of prayer, and sweet communion with the saints, have driven them more closely to the throne of grace, in the light of which they have seen God more fully and clearly, and realised more definitely their relation to Him ; so that often their unassuming and humble words have been pervaded with such an enviable warmth and tenderness, such a joyous sense of personal relationship to God, such a consciousness of basking in the sunshine of His smile—their very countenances radiant from their communion with Him in the Mount—that in them are found most striking illustrations of the words of the Divine Master : "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven ;" "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled ;" "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

T. W. AVELING.

TWILIGHT.

THE radiant colours in the west are paling,
 Fast fades the gold, and green, and crimson light,
 And softly comes, each trivial object veiling,
 The all-ennobling mystery of night.

This is the hour of thought and silent musing,
 When poets' fancies tender buds unfold ;
 Like the sweet primrose of the twilight, choosing
 To spend on evening, noonday's gift of gold.

These blossoms hide within their deep recesses
 Treasures the wandering wind can never seize ;
 Not all its inner wealth the flower confesses,
 Nor gives its choicest perfume to the breeze.

What wizard's wand can charm the secret sweetness
From the fair prison where it lies concealed ?
What poet's lay can show in grand completeness,
The inmost heart, by human speech revealed ?

We twine the spell of rich harmonious numbers,
We conjure up the graceful words in vain :
Our lighter fancies waken from their slumbers ;
Without a voice the noblest thoughts remain.

So dash the restless billows of the ocean,
But bring no tidings of the tranquil deep :
Above, are endless tumult and commotion ;
Below, are silence and eternal sleep.

Beneath the realms that human skill discloses,
Where Life and Death have ceased their ancient fight,
The deep foundation of the earth reposes ;
A temple sacred to primeval night.

In wild rejoicing, and in vengeful madness,
Men haste o'er vale and mountain, sea and shore ;
But calmly, underneath their grief and gladness,
The earth's great secret lies for evermore.

Above, the sky with myriad stars is gleaming ;
Fair in their light the sleeping land appears ;
And yet that radiance, o'er the earth down-streaming,
Tells not the wonders of the distant spheres.

And far beyond the realms of star-light glory,
Are mysteries too high for Fancy's wing ;
Nameless alike in science and in story,
In all that sage can tell, or poet sing.

As height and depth alike transcend our vision,
The human soul whence clearest lustre beams,
Has yet its Hades and its fields Elysian,
Revealed alone in symbols and in dreams.

For there are griefs, that none has ever spoken ;
Joys, that no mortal tongue has power to tell :
The silence of the soul must be unbroken,
Till to the speech of earth we bid farewell.

CONSTANCE NADEN.

THE BURIALS BILL.

IF Dissenters find nothing to satisfy and much to irritate in the extraordinary proposals made by the Duke of Richmond, with a view to the settlement of the Burials Question, they have, at least, the blessedness of those who expect nothing and are, consequently, free from the vexation of disappointment. Such a Bill as that now before the House of Lords would have been something worse even than an indignity, it would have been a treacherous betrayal of trust, if it had proceeded from a Whig peer professing himself a friend. Happily we seem to have got past the time when that was possible. Our increased influence on public opinion is shown by the fact that we are no longer mocked by such illusory schemes for the redress of our grievances, as those extraordinary expedients for getting rid of the Church-rate difficulty, by a skilful process of legerdemain which was to satisfy Dissenters, and yet leave the Church in possession of the funds she desired, which once found favour in the eyes of Mr. Spring Rice, and, deceptive as they were, were nevertheless too strong for many of the Whigs of the day. Lord Granville is the type of the Liberal peer of to-day, and we have only to compare him with any of his predecessors as leaders of the party in the Lords, to see how decided an advance has been made. To the Tories is now left the invidious task of proposing compromises which are really nothing better than attempts so to mask the wrong which needs removal, as to delude the unwary, or those who are so desirous to be on pleasant terms with the privileged class, that they are quite willing to be deceived. Perhaps there is hardly so much care to preserve an appearance of conciliation on the part of a Ministry like the present, as there would have been in the case of a Whig Cabinet, even of a very mild colour, as there certainly is less of that liberal and friendly talk which serves only to provoke when it is not translated into action. But, on the whole, the Conservatives of to-day are pursuing a policy to us much the same in general as that of the Whigs a quarter of a century ago, and though the present Bill is more offensive than a Whig proposal might have been, it does not disturb us, because we at once recognise the fact that the measure must be conceived in hostility to us, and of course does not annoy, as it might if it were offered as a gift of friendship.

The hostility, indeed, is scarcely disguised. Not only in the paltry nature of the concessions offered to Nonconformists, but in the style of argument adopted by the Duke in introducing his Bill, in the ostentatious prominence given to sanitary considerations as the reasons for action, and in the endeavour to bring even the petty boon with which the Nonconformist demand is met under an imposing scheme of general

consolidation of Burial Acts, the spirit of the Ministry is abundantly manifest. They will reduce their offers to Nonconformists to the minimum which the discontented members of their own party, who begin to be anxious about their seats, will allow, and they take care that what is done shall be done as ungraciously as possible. We are not sorry that it should be so. It is another tribute to the incorruptible fidelity of Dissenters to the Liberal party and its principles. Wherever there is even a remote hope of detaching any important section of Liberals from their old associations, Tories are ready to make a bid. We do not despair of an attempt being made to gain Home Rulers, in the pursuit of the policy which has already been adopted towards Trade Unions and the advocates of local self-government. To do the Ministry justice, they are not disposed to be hampered by the conventional prejudices of their party, or restrained by the most venerable traditions, from attempting what they consider necessary reforms. If they can find any plan by which they may secure credit, without abandoning any of those class privileges which they have been placed in office to defend, they do not allow any slight objections to hinder them from proposing it. Nothing seems to please them more than an attempt to grapple with some difficulty which the Liberals have left untouched, and to obtain credit for removing it, though, in truth, they may have done nothing more than pass one of those "permissive" Bills of which they are fond, by which perplexing questions are taken out of the sphere of the Imperial legislature and left to be dealt with by some local body. But in the case of Nonconformists, they do not make any such venture. From them they know there is nothing to hope, and they deal with them accordingly. It is probable that not a word would have been heard about this vexed Burials Question, had it not become clear that there were Tories who could not be trusted to obey the whip, if they were required to support a policy of uncompromising resistance. It was but little that even most of these more liberal Conservatives would have given, and they were not desirous that the little should be really good, but they were anxious to offer something, and the Ministry have had to try and gratify them. The diminishing majorities on Mr. Osborne Morgan's motions were a sign to which no leader could afford to be indifferent. It was essential that some proposal should be made, and the only thing was to make it as small and insignificant as possible. The Cabinet have, in this matter, been influenced by the well-understood wishes of some of their own supporters, and it only remains to be seen now whether these gentlemen, who have not hesitated to avow their conviction that this sore must not be allowed to remain open, will consider that enough has been done to quiet the troublesome constituents with whom they have to deal. If there had been a hope that Dissenters

might be turned from the error of their ways, and led to see the wickedness of Liberal principles, it is quite possible that some more substantial overtures would have been made. As this is a possibility on which even the most sanguine Tory cannot calculate, and as no proposal, however small, is likely to be acceptable to the country clergy, whose allegiance even now is somewhat shaky, what has been done is to make a show of liberality which, it is hoped, may at all events silence those more sagacious and liberal-minded Conservatives, who are vexed that their party should be compromised by the defence of what, however it may be glossed over, is regarded by numbers as an act of persecution of the most wanton and indefensible character. If it goes far enough to meet the views even of these, our more reasonable opponents, they must have but little penetration. It is perfectly certain that it does nothing to abate the Dissenting grievance, or to remove the crying scandals which have created the necessity for legislation.

The very selection of the Duke of Richmond as the proposer of the Bill, was of evil augury for the hopes which any too sanguine Dissenters might have entertained of getting any measure which might be even moderately satisfactory. The Duke, indeed, was chosen to introduce the Bill—one of the most extraordinary that ever emanated from a Conservative Government—which abolished patronage in the Scotch Church, and thus prepared the way for its eventual, and probably not remote, Disestablishment. But this certainly was not done in deference to any Nonconformist objectors, but in the hope of winning back some seceders, and so strengthening the State Church. It was a singular policy, and one which, we believe, will yet prove to have been as short-sighted as it was certainly inconsistent with Conservative principles. It cannot be doubted, however, that it was shaped in the hope of breaking the force of Scotch liberalism, and thus gaining some accession of numerical force to the Anglican Establishment, of which his Grace is a devoted champion. With no other aim would he have proposed it. When, therefore, the task of dealing with the claim of Dissenters to inter their dead in the parochial graveyards, with such rites as they might prefer, was committed to him, it was certain that nothing which could furnish even a basis for negotiation, still less which could be regarded as a settlement, would be proposed. If a more liberal policy had been in the ascendant, the Bill would have been introduced in the other House; or if it was desirable, because of the state of public business, to submit it first to the consideration of the Peers, the Premier himself might have been expected to undertake the very difficult task of educating his party up to the necessary point of compromise. But, in truth, even if the Ministry were more desirous of conciliating Dissenters than they have ever shown themselves to be in any of their pro-

ceedings, they dare not venture to brave the wrath of their clerical supporters. The country clergy have hitherto been among the most trusty members of the Tory party ; but there is just now a spirit of disaffection abroad with which it is not safe to trifle. The Public Worship Regulation Act has sown broadcast seeds of suspicion and distrust, whose harvest has yet to be reaped. The light-hearted politicians who treat Mr. Tooth as a fanatic, and would fain convert his imprisonment into a screaming farce, are showing the same kind of sagacity which M. Ollivier displayed on the eve of the war, which was so soon to ruin him and the dynasty he served. The strange spectacle of a clergyman immured in Horsemonger-lane Gaol, has produced an impression that will not easily be effaced on numbers who do not belong to the English Church Union, and whose voices have not even swelled the clamour against Lord Penzance and his judgments. It is not forgotten that the Bill was flung in the face of High Churchmen by the Premier, with the insolent declaration that he was resolved to put down Ritualism, and while that remains in the recollection of the clergy, it is idle to tell them that it was not a Government measure. The same class have been, if possible, still more deeply offended by the attitude of Lord Beaconsfield in relation to the outrages on their fellow-Christians in Bulgaria. How far the feeling extends is not yet fully known ; but the Buckinghamshire election was sufficient to show that it was not safe to defy it. If, under such circumstances, the Government undertook a Burials Bill, we may be sure it was with the intention rather of recovering some lost ground among the clergy, than with any idea of propitiating Dissenters by the cession even of part of their claims. The parsons must be taught that Codlin's their true friend after all, and how could it be better done than by passing a Bill which should seem to give something to Nonconformists, but should, in fact, be a re-assertion of the exclusive rights of the clergy ?

Such the Duke's Bill really is. By consolidating the numerous Acts which at present cumber the Statute-Book, and by making provision for new cemeteries in parishes where Dissenters at present have none, while at the same time their demand for equal rights in existing graveyards is put aside, a new legislative sanction is practically given to clerical pretensions. The position of Nonconformists will, in this respect, be worse than it is at present. We have now to contend against a long-established custom, against a prevalent idea as to the rights of the parish priest in the parish cemetery, and against the law which is supposed to sanction his claims. We do not mean to say that there is even now any legal ground for disputing this power, but there is an unquestionable common-law right of the parishioner which it is not easy to reconcile with it. But the present Bill, should it pass, will end this difficulty by providing a substitute for the parishioner's right, and thus far

will make the position of the clergyman stronger than before. He sacrifices nothing, unless, indeed, the permission to Nonconformists to dispense with his office, and have a "silent service," as it is called, at the grave, be considered as a sacrifice; but as his fees will doubtless be guaranteed, it can be no great hardship for him to be exempted from reading the forms of the Church over the dead bodies of those who, while living, treated them with neglect, if they did not regard them with positive aversion. What sacrifice is to be made is exacted from the parishioners, who are to be taxed for a new cemetery, in order that the soul of the clergyman may not be vexed by the intrusion of a Dissenting minister to offer prayers and thanksgivings to God in a public burying-ground which the parson has come to regard as his freehold.

The Bill seems to have the merit of simplicity, if we are to judge of it from the Duke's speech. It makes no alterations at all in the regulations for any consecrated ground which is allowed to be used, except that of which we have just spoken. The relative or other person having the direction of a funeral is to be allowed, on due notice being given to the clergyman whose duty it would be to officiate, to dispense with his services. Beyond this, the only recognition of a Dissenter's grievance is in the provision for the establishment of a Burial Authority with power, on requisition from a certain number of parishioners, to secure a cemetery for Nonconformists at the expense of the parish, and liable, on failure to exercise this power, to be compelled to do it by the Secretary of State. "From the decision of the Burial Authority that ground was not required, there might be appeal to the Secretary of State, who would require the Burial Authority to provide ground, if he thought that the existing burial-ground was not 'sufficient and suitable.' Of course the words 'suitable and sufficient' would include the religious views of those who make the appeal." This is really the only point in which the case of Dissenters is touched at all; and so far is the Duke from any desire to convince them that their claims have been considered, and that he offers his Bill as an honest attempt to meet them, that he makes an ostentatious parade of his being influenced mainly by other considerations. "He preferred," he said, "to rest his case on sanitary and consolidation grounds;" and the Bill he described as "thoroughly practical and useful"—that is, it had nothing to do with such sentimental follies as the wishes of Nonconformists. "It would establish a uniform system throughout the country, remove many of the anomalies that were now admitted to exist, and tend to promote the health and well-being of the community." Very possibly; and yet the pretext thus put forth is too transparent to impose upon any one. Mr. Cross, in his speech last year, was the first to start the ingenious idea that it would be best to treat the whole affair as a sanitary measure.

The Ministry have caught at it, and the Duke of Richmond embodies it in his speech recommending the Bill. Yet all the world knows that we should have heard nothing of consolidation or sanitation, or of this wonderful Bill—by which so much is to be done for the health and well-being of the community, as well as for the simplifying of an obscure and complicated law—if it had not been for the clamours of the Dissenters. Dissenters are entitled, then, to the gratitude of the nation. We now learn that the condition of numbers of the parochial graveyards is a scandal to the country and a danger to the public health. But we have never heard any complaints from their proper custodians, the parish clergymen. Among the gravamina about which Convocation troubles itself, we do not remember that any action has ever been taken on this point. It has certainly spent time and thought on matters of very inferior importance. It is unfortunate that this should have been overlooked. Happily for the country, it can be overlooked no more. The evil is confessed, and is dealt with; but thanks to Dissenters even for this! They have not got what they asked—justice for themselves; but they have not spoken and laboured in vain if they have compelled attention to a prolific source of disease and death, which otherwise might have been left to produce the same mischief in the future as, on the confession of Tory Ministers, it has done in the past. If the Government will do nothing to sweeten the relations between contending parties, it is fortunate that they have such care for the public health as to remove one cause of fever and pestilence in our rural districts.

But it is only necessary to study the Duke of Richmond's words attentively to see that, just as far as the Bill operates at all, it will intensify all the party animosities which at present exist, and produce a plentiful crop of discussion and strife. Those words which look so simple, but are so pregnant with mischief—"suitable and sufficient"—are alone sufficient to set a peaceful village in a blaze. We have already had experience of their mischief-making power in connection with our schools; but anything they have effected there is little compared with what is to be expected should they ever be thrown down among the village magnates who will constitute the Burial Authority, to be a subject for wrangling and contention, the question to be decided being whether a new rate shall be piled on the present heavy burdens of local taxation. We can easily fancy what influence would be brought to bear in order to deter the Nonconformists from pressing their claim, and how the "sensible Nonconformists" would be invited to separate themselves from their more extreme brethren, who illustrate so unpleasantly the "dissidence of Dissent"—how some might be induced to manifest their liberality by a vote which would at the same time save their pockets, and the results thus obtained would be quoted, in addition to the marriage

returns and other equally convincing statistics with which we are familiar, as signs of the weakness of Dissent. Nothing could be more skilfully devised for this purpose. What Dissenters in these parishes desire is, to lay their dead in the venerable resting-places where the forefathers of the hamlet sleep, and to do it with such religious service as may be most agreeable to their own feeling. To tell them that the Burial Board of the parish will provide them a separate cemetery of their own, if there are a sufficient number desiring it, is simple mockery. This is not what they want. They desire that their rights shall be respected in the parochial graveyard where their ancestors and friends have been laid, and where they too would lay their dead. They have no wish to impose on the parish the cost of a new graveyard, the only occasion for which arises out of the determination of the clergy to shut them out of that to which they consider themselves fairly entitled.

The mere question of cost, in many parishes, will be a serious one, and, in the present state of local taxation, will hinder the working of the measure, and, if it were pressed, would create a strong prejudice against Nonconformists, in deference to whose scruples, it would be asserted—though most unjustly—that this additional outlay was required. An illustration of the grievances which may arise is supplied by a correspondent of the *Manchester Examiner*—one of those country journals which are gallantly doing for Nonconformity the service which it seeks in vain from the daily press of the metropolis—in the case of Tenby. There the Town Council secured a considerable piece of ground for a new cemetery, intending that it should be for the use both of Churchmen and Dissenters, and that part of it, therefore, should be left unconsecrated. By some “juggle” (to use the reporter’s own words) the intention was defeated, and the whole was consecrated, the late Bishops of St. David’s and of Winchester assisting in the ceremonial. Here, then, is a parish where the provision was ample, and where it was made by the whole of the population, and designed for the use of all, but from which the Nonconformists, who bore their share of the cost, are practically excluded. Is, then, the town to be taxed a second time, in order that a separate ground may be secured for those so unjustly deprived of that in which they had the same right as their neighbours? How many such cases there may be, we know not; but, wherever they are found, they are sure to produce a considerable amount of discord. Indeed, even where there are no such aggravations, any increase of the local burdens will be extremely distasteful.

Whether Dissenters would succeed in overcoming the opposition that is certain to be made to any attempt to carry out the provisions of the Bill, is a point on which we do not care to speculate. As to any prospects there may be of obtaining from the Secretary of State the consider-

ration which might be denied them by the local Board, we are certainly not sanguine. The idea of an appeal to an authority in Downing-street, which may be assumed to be free from the prejudices of local partizans, has a fine sound and looks well from the distance, but our experience in the matter of Education does not encourage the expectation that it would have any great practical result. But we do not care to discuss it; for we trust that, should the Bill pass, Dissenters will allow this clause to remain inoperative. It does nothing to meet their wishes, and there can be no reason why they should incur the odium sure to attend any endeavour to put it in force. What it does is to give a parish power to tax itself, or, in case of its refusal, the Secretary of State the right to tax it, in order to spare the too scrupulous conscience or too sensitive feelings of the clergyman, which would be disturbed if a Dissenting minister were to officiate at the graveyard which the clergyman vainly regards as his own—perhaps we should add, to save the God-fearing sexton or clerk, with whom Canon Ryle has made us familiar. The clergyman will be aggrieved because he is not allowed to officiate, the sexton and clerk because it is assumed (on what grounds we fail to see) that they will be forced to attend. The Dissenters are to be deprived of their rights, and the whole parish is to be taxed, in order that the tender susceptibilities of these good men may not be wounded. It is a heavy price to pay for so small a result; but the worst feature of the case is that the discredit will not fall on the right parties.

We do not propose to discuss at any length the insulting offer of a "silent service." The suggestion is marked by that contempt for the feelings of Dissenters, which was as marked in the speech of the Duke of Richmond as in the measure he proposed. So far as the interests of the Established Church go, the rôle of the Government is that of "no surrender." There is much to be said in favour of such a policy. A point has been reached in which it seems almost necessary to choose between the clergy and the Nonconformists, for it would require almost superhuman ingenuity to devise a compromise which would satisfy the one and not irritate the other. It is true that the adoption of the decided line taken by the Government may alienate from their ranks some, especially among the Methodists, whose political feelings were in the balance, and will be inclined to Liberalism by the exhibition on the part of the Ministry of this intense dislike to Dissent and contempt for its most reasonable demands. But it was necessary to venture something, and possibly this is the smallest amount of risk that could have been incurred. It could not have been necessary, however, and therefore must have been impolitic, to assume the *de haut en bas* style, and to show that supercilious temper which can do nothing except irritate those towards whom it is shown. Dissenters do not expect to bask in the smiles of the Duke of Richmond's favour, but a Minister makes a grievous mistake

when he treats a powerful body of religionists as a set of Pariahs, whose alleged grievances, though they are awakening bitterest feelings in thousands of hearts, turning the resting-places of the dead into fields of strife, and agitating the country from end to end, and compelling the attention even of a Conservative House of Commons, would not have been worthy of notice, had it not been necessary to make the Statute-Book intelligible and the villages of the country more salubrious.

The Primate's speech was not much more palatable than that of the Lord-President. But there was this difference between them. The Duke seemed to offend of *malice présumée*; the Archbishop erred from sheer incapacity to appreciate the Nonconformist position. With the former there was a tone of genuine contempt, which there was scarcely an effort to conceal or to relieve by the addition of some other element. The latter evidently meant to be gracious, and even liberal, and if he failed to be so, and was in fact quite other than that, it was due to the deluding influence of his own position, and to some mistaken ideas, how obtained it is difficult to say, of the secret feelings of Nonconformists. That any man who has studied this question, and who has made himself acquainted with the speeches and writings of Dissenters upon it, as we conclude the Primate would do before expressing an opinion, should have got it into his head that he and his brethren could possibly prepare such a Burial Service as would remove the difficulty, seems almost incredible. It would not be a very hard task, indeed, for his Grace himself to arrange a formulary, taken principally from the Book of Common Prayer, which the great majority of Christians, to whatever Church they belong, would be able to use. But the question is not of the voluntary adoption of certain prayers and thanksgivings. If that were all, the controversy would never have attained the vast proportions it has reached; for there are numbers of the strongest supporters of Mr. Osborne Morgan who would have no scruple in using the service prescribed by the Church. It is a question of right which is at stake, involving the selection of the officiating minister, and consequently, also, of the form of service. The Archbishop does not even approach the difficulty in his suggestion. What he tells us is, that the Bishops and Convocation are desirous of satisfying any reasonable scruples on the part of Nonconformists, and willing to prepare a special service for them, and that where even this does not satisfy, and the "presence and voice of a clergyman of the Church of England" are themselves a grievance, the Duke's Bill "would soon provide a place where they might have it all their own way." The Primate ought to have seen that all this amounts to nothing. No modifications in a service will touch the objections of those who protest against having a service imposed on them at all. Dissenters object strongly to use the words of confident

hope contained in the Burial Service without discrimination, but it is hardly probable that they would be reconciled to a service—one still imposed by law—by merely having those words toned down or omitted altogether in the case of their friends or relations, in regard to many of whom they could employ them with the fullest assurance. The discussion about the Burial Service itself belongs to an entirely different department of the great controversy between Church and Dissent, and enters only accidentally into that relating to the parochial graveyards. We object to their exclusive use by the privileged Church, and we should object none the less if the clergyman was always a man whom we could respect, and if in the formularies there was not an expression which offended our conscience.

Of course by writing thus we separate ourselves from the class whom the Archbishop is pleased to describe as the “sensible Dissenting brethren.” It might seem as though there were some underground railway between Lambeth Palace and the Nonconformist communities, by means of which the Primate was able to keep up communications with these schismatics, and assure himself of the state of feeling among them. Who the Nonconformists can be who humour his fancies by giving him to understand that there is a large section whose views are extremely moderate, that is, who are not prepared to push their principles to an extreme, or to give them an inconvenient prominence, if only some deference be shown to their feelings, we will not even presume to guess. Indeed, we cannot help believing that they are mythical creatures, and that when the Archbishop talks about “sensible Nonconformists,” the majority of whom are to approve of the Duke of Richmond’s insulting overtures, he is only indulging in the not unnatural supposition that his own views must approve themselves to the judgment of all Nonconformists who have not allowed Christian charity to be overborne by bigotry or prejudice. The existence of such an illusion destroys whatever faint chance of settlement there might otherwise have been. So long as it is thought possible that Nonconformists, with the exception of an extreme school, who make up for their numerical feebleness by their violence of speech and action, can look favourably on such a mockery as this Burials Bill, it is not possible that there should be even an approach to agreement. But it is for Nonconformists themselves now to demonstrate the fallacy of the Primate’s suggestions. There should be no mistake as to their sentiments relative to this Bill. The feeling of Congregationalists is unanimous, and it ought to be expressed with a strength and plainness which it shall be impossible to mistake. The wise and manly speech of Earl Granville, for which he deserves our hearty gratitude, not only shows that they will have leaders, but gives just reason for hope that the Liberal party will be united in opposition, and that the Government will be compelled to withdraw their Bill.

WHITHERSOEVER HE GOETH.

O LAMB of God, when Thou dost lead
 Where Siloh ripples soft and slow
 Through flowery dell and verdant mead,
 How willingly we rise and go!
 Our hearts athirst for water-brooks
 In leafy groves of pleasant shade,
 And for the rest of cool, still nooks,
 Which Thy dear love hath made.

O Lamb of God, by Siloh's stream
 Left to our rest we fain would be,
 And in the death-like silence dream
 That we are keeping close to Thee—
 Though Thou hast crossed the brook and ta'en
 The road of thorns and rugged stone—
 Nor feel a pang of shame or pain
 That Thou dost go alone.

O Lamb of God, wilt Thou not keep
 Our eyes from sleep, our strength uphold,
 Whilst in the night are Thy lost sheep
 Far from the shelter of the fold?
 Let not our hearts be summer-dried,
 Like a dead sand-weed by the sea;
 But fill them e'en with sorrow's tide,
 So that it ebbs to Thee.

O Lamb of God, help us to Thee,
 To give the keeping of our days,
 That, seeking not to choose or see
 The windings of our ordered ways,
 Our souls in equal peace may rest:
 In peace as undisturbed and sweet,
 When bid to sleep upon Thy breast,
 Or follow Thy dear feet.

JAMES BOWKER.

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

THE appearance, in the first number of the *Nineteenth Century*, of a defence of the Establishment, from the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, is a sign of the times. The article will no doubt call forth a reply in the same *Review*, but it will itself advance the interests of religious equality. We have no disposition to press harshly on the Bishop, when we say that his advocacy is more likely to injure his own cause than that of his opponents. On the contrary, we believe that the weakness of his argument is due to his honesty. He would fain have things different from what they are, and does his best to take the most cheerful view, but with the exception of his endeavour to minimise the power of sacerdotalism in the Establishment, he has not suffered his optimism to blind him to the great perils of the situation. The article has been described as a piece of "amiable feebleness," and we are willing to accept the characterisation, provided that the adjective is applied to the Bishop, and the substantive to his cause. Had his Lordship been less anxious to conciliate, less careful about his statements, more unscrupulous and uncompromising in his partisanship, he might have been more acceptable to his own associates. His desire to be fair has hampered him, and given an appearance of inconsistency and feebleness to his reasonings which is fairly chargeable upon the difficulties of the position he has undertaken to maintain, rather than on any defects of his. Take, for example, the subject of patronage. The Bishop, referring to the failure of all attempts at reform, says: "Patrons and others interested in the matter were too strong for any fiduciary theories, and have effectually hindered the removal from our Church system of a blot and defect, on which not only Mr. Bright but every speaker of intelligence, when discussing Church matters, instantly places his finger." It probably was not judicious to make such a statement, but that it is true will hardly be questioned by anyone who knows the facts. The abuses of which the Bishop speaks are not more patent than the hopelessness of any endeavour to remedy them. The statements of the Bishop of Peterborough, in his speech in the House of Lords and in his Charge, were so appalling, that the Bill which he introduced seemed a very little thing by their side. But little as it was, it was too much for the owners of advowsons. They were keen enough to see that the abuses could not be touched without the whole system being brought into peril, and the rulers of the Church know that the overthrow of patronage means the destruction of the Establishment. The new plutocracy cling to this "system of purchase," and to the kind of power which it enables them

to buy even more than the old aristocracy, and in these *nouveaux riches* the strength of the Church largely lies. Hence those who have to defend her must be content to make the best of these evils. The misfortune of the Bishop is, that he can neither reconcile himself to the gross abuses of a "system of purchase," nor honestly say that there is a reasonable hope of their being removed. He indulges in pleasant dreams of the restraints which public opinion may impose, but that is the furthest point to which he can venture. Of the interference of law, the only kind of interference for which such offenders would care, he has no hope. For this the *Guardian* took him to task. Such a confession as his was certainly not very politic; indeed, the *Guardian* is right when it says, "We cannot imagine any language more likely to strengthen the hands of the Liberation Society, or to furnish the forthcoming attack on this very subject, which Mr. Leatham has promised us, with some of its most telling periods." The feelings of the journalist are perfectly natural, but we fail to find in the article any ground for doubting the truth of the Bishop's statements. The "attitude of timid acquiescence in an acknowledged abuse" is not a very noble one, and it is true that "a Bishop should be the last man in the world to counsel us to give up the siege of a stronghold of evil, because it has not surrendered at the first summons." But what if the siege has become utterly desperate? Still more, what if its continuance means imminent peril to the camp of the assailants themselves? This is what the Bishop evidently considers to be the real state of affairs. He sees what the *Guardian* is unwilling to see, that if he is to save the Establishment he must tolerate these crying abuses. The attitude is not a noble one, but the question is, whether any other is possible. The article in the *Guardian* has drawn forth a letter from the Bishop of Peterborough, which is even more suggestive than the statements of his brother of Gloucester. Dr. Magee explains that his reason for desisting from further action in Parliament at present is not, as had been hinted, a decline of earnestness in himself, still less a dread of the abuse of Bishops, but "simply the utter want of such support from the Church at large as alone could ensure the success of any measure of reform on this subject." What, then, remains to be done by the Church reformers? Nothing, but that their efforts "must for some time to come be directed to reforming and stimulating the public conscience, rather than to attempts at carrying, in the face of powerful opposition, and with very languid support, measures of reform in Parliament." In the meantime, the question has passed into the hands of the enemies of the Establishment, and Dr. Magee is fully alive to the danger arising from this. We do not venture to penetrate his secret thoughts, but we fancy he sees that the system, as a deadly serpent, will strangle the Establishment,

unless the Establishment can be extricated from its coils; and he is not without his fears that the process to which he trusts, of stimulating the consciences of Churchmen, will be too slow in its action to avert the evil which he foresees.

The Bishop of Gloucester's observations on another point are not less disquieting, though for a different reason and to other classes of the people. The friends of the Establishment may well have their anxieties awakened by his despairing utterances as to the abuses of patronage. The Protestants of the nation may reasonably be even more disturbed by the hints he gives as to the expected judgment in the Folkestone case. "That case may not, after all, terminate so very hopelessly to High Church interests as may be generally assumed. Judges even of the Supreme Court are not the less wise and true well-wishers of the National Church, and though we do not for one moment believe that the decision will be otherwise than framed on considerations of purest equity, yet it is not difficult to conceive, at such a crisis as the present, that the form of expression in which the decision will be formulated will be wise, convincing, and conciliatory." There is a delicious vagueness about this which is eminently Episcopal. We fear we must here give up the Bishop, and say that the fault is in himself. If he could not say more, he had better have remained silent, for he has only awakened hopes on the one side and fears on the other, both of which may be equally unreasonable. Those who read between the lines will, of course, infer that there will be another attempt at compromise. What such compromises mean, it is not difficult to see. We had one, or what was meant to be one, in the Bennett case. The Evangelicals were to be soothed by the declaration that Transubstantiation was not the doctrine of the Church of England, and those who calculated that they would be satisfied with a harmless declaration, whose effect was immediately neutralised by the concessions made in the judgment, showed their sagacity. The condoning of Mr. Bennett's error, or rather the decision that he had not so far transgressed the law as to require his suspension, practically granted a toleration to any teaching which did not go in excess of his. The so-called compromise meant the surrender of all that Ritualists could desire, so far as doctrine was concerned. The danger now is that there may be a similar compromise (?) in matters of ritual, and that, as soon as it has been sanctioned, we shall have the Evangelicals quietly reconciling themselves to it, and discovering that the very points about which they have created all this agitation are very subordinate and secondary, after all. It would be melancholy to see what was once a great party, and one which certainly has a most important place to fill in this nation, thus recklessly throwing away its own strength. For it to

acquiesce either in the eastward position or the sacrificial vestments, would certainly place all its action against Mr. Tooth in the most odious light. He has been persecuted and prosecuted for very trivial offences, if either of these two points—the most important involved in the Ridsdale case—is to be regarded as a neutral question. Of course the Rubrical transgressions, for which he is actually inhibited, are different. But none of them is graver in its nature, or involves a more decided and objectionable symbolism, than the two points to which we have referred. Grant either of them, and the extreme idea of sacerdotalism in ritual is sanctioned. Attitudes and robes are valued solely because, “as Mr. Bennett told the Ritual Commission, in relation to the chasuble, they keep before the people the idea of a priest offering a propitiatory sacrifice.” Allow this, and it is mere puerility, or unworthy vindictiveness, to prosecute and punish clergymen for the lighting of a candle, or the tolling of a bell, or the singing of the “Agnus Dei.” Yet, unless one or other of these points be conceded, possibly both, we do not see what comfort awaits the High Church party in the judgment. That the “wise, convincing, and conciliatory” form in which the judgment may be expressed, will make it more acceptable to those whose views it condemns, is a hope which only an optimist Bishop could indulge.

Of course when a Bishop can write in this style, and remind us that the judges are “wise and true well-wishers of the Church,” which if it means anything, suggests that they may allow zeal for the Establishment to cause them to strain the law in favour of those whom it would be dangerous to drive into rebellion, there is in Church circles a good deal of speculation as to what the judgment will be. The *Church Times* has received information, which has come from a “very high quarter,” that the precedent set by the Gorham Judgment, in 1850, is to be followed. It proceeds, “We understand (though we hope that official contradiction will follow) that on Wednesday week it was arranged to allow the Eastward position, and, we believe, wafer bread, but to pronounce the Eucharistic vestments illegal. Our details on the subject extend yet further, and imply that the majority of the Judges are satisfied of the legality of the vestments, but lack the moral courage to say so, in face of the supposed popular hostility to them, and the possible vindictive action of the Evangelical party.” It would not serve any useful purpose to discuss the probabilities of truth in a rumour which does, in fact, reflect a large amount of floating opinion. The idea of many is that an attempt will be made to please both parties, and that this will be done in the way indicated above. The mere existence of such a rumour, whatever the intrinsic value attaching to it, may be of advantage if it has the effect of showing how little is to be gained by a temporising

policy. Protestants, certainly, will not be pleased with it, and yet the *Church Times*, from the other side, describes it as the product of "Machiavellian astuteness, which sought to win over to Cæsar the main body of the army, whose inclination was evidently to throw in their lot with Christ." The object of such a compromise could not be set forth more correctly. It would be a sop to the moderate High Churchmen, who are scrupulous about the Eastward position, but so far from looking on the vestments with favour, regard their adoption as a mistake. If the extreme Ritualists could be brought to submit, this might settle the matter; but of this the hope is very faint indeed. The ravings of the *Church Times* are, indeed, so violent as to suggest the thought that it has only given such prominence to the report in order that it may have an opportunity of denouncing the suggested arrangement beforehand. To our mind, there is something indecent in this discussion of a judgment by anticipation, especially as the underlying thought in the criticism is that the court will not be governed by the law, but will have respect also to the possible consequences of its decision. It must be with a view to this that the judges are instructed that the "legality of the vestments is not in any sense a doubtful point," and are warned that such a decision as that indicated "will give universal dissatisfaction, and largely increase the feeling of deep and wide-spread exasperation which the previous findings of the Privy Council have excited. *It will be the signal for a religious war, compared with which the troubled quarter of a century gone by will be regarded as a peaceful epoch.*" The only parallel we know to this attempt to browbeat a Court is in the columns of the *Englishman*, and the speeches of the advocates of the "unfortunate nobleman" who is languishing in Dartmoor prison. But we are bound to add that it finds some excuse in the policy hitherto pursued by the Ecclesiastical Courts, and for which they have been commended by the Erastian champions of the Establishment. If it is understood that Courts are influenced by statesmanlike considerations, it is natural enough that journalists on all sides should try to put those considerations before them with as much force as possible.

The Bishop of Manchester is not often self-contradictory; but in a speech recently made at Manchester, he took a position which it is not very easy to understand. He reads history in his own fashion, and so is able, despite the declarations of Sheldon, and the distinct aim of the policy which issued in the passing of the Act of Uniformity, and the expulsion of the Nonconformist ministers, to assert that "he did not believe that the Church of England ever meant to lay down a rigid rule of uniformity." But this is a fault which he only shares in common with many of his Episcopal brethren, who are as nobly superior to the mere

letter of history, as the well-known Kaiser was to grammar. When he tells us in the same breath that the Public Worship Regulation Act was almost a necessity, and yet that to enforce it thoroughly all round would be to destroy the Church, he involves himself in a difficulty. "If," he said, "they were to bring the Public Worship Regulation Act—against which he had nothing to say, for it seemed to him a legitimate and almost a necessary Act—to bear upon all congregations throughout the land, and send spies into the churches to note everything, they would rouse a spirit in the Church which would burst it asunder." What can the Bishop mean? Opposition to the Act is intelligible, and when Dr. Fraser declares that he would lay down his office rather than be a persecutor, which, we suppose, means rather than carry out the Act in the way described, he shows that he would follow out such opposition consistently, and in that noble spirit of indifference to mere station or power by which he has always been distinguished. But to admit that the Act was legitimate, and then protest against its universal enforcement, is simply absurd. Law can know, or at least ought to know, no favourites. If it is for one, it must be for all. Then as to spies in churches, there ought to be nothing done in churches of which the whole world may not take cognizance. It is, indeed, only another proof of the extreme tension which is now upon all the rulers of the Church, that a Bishop, who has as much common sense as any prelate on the Bench, should talk in this fashion.

A new "schism" has broken out in Scotland under singular circumstances. The Scottish Episcopal Church, whose bishops and clergy still delight to talk of themselves as the disestablished and disendowed Church of Scotland—one of them, in a letter to the *Guardian*, drawing a harrowing picture of the state of his Church in a recent number, as a caution to those of his English brethren who might be looking to Disestablishment as a cure for their evils—has grown more pretentious and pushing of late. Among other things which are displeasing to its members has been the existence of congregations of English Episcopalians, who have maintained their connection with the English Church, and have been under the superintendence of her Bishops. Remonstrances have, we believe, been more than once addressed to the English Bench against this anomalous state of things, and recently attempts have been made to compel all these congregations to place themselves under the jurisdiction of the Scotch Bishops. The congregations, however, have not all been compliant, and a number of them have united together and chosen a ruler of their own, an ex-colonial Bishop, who has accepted the office, and, as all good High Churchmen assert, inaugurated a new schism by so doing. There has been a lively correspondence between

Lord Kinnaid and the Earl of Shaftesbury, in which the great defender of Evangelicalism handles his opponent somewhat severely, and the whole affair is a curious illustration of the state of Episcopacy both in England and Scotland.

An incident, instructive not only in itself but because of the comments it has called forth, is reported from Boston Spa, in Yorkshire. This pleasant little spot is blessed, in addition to its other advantages, with a priest of a decidedly Ritualist type, who is determined to maintain the rights of the Church as represented not only by himself, but also by his wife. It would seem as though this excellent man regarded the scholars in the National School as his proper subjects, and required of them that they should on all occasions show becoming respect to himself and his partner. Unhappily, there is a "sturdy Independent" in the village who does not take precisely the same view of their relations, and who positively prohibited his daughter from curtsying to the vicar's wife, as required. Through this petty difference it is alleged that the child has been expelled from the only available school in the place, an efficient schoolmaster driven from the position he has filled satisfactorily for years, and so the fires of sectarian strife have been lighted in Boston Spa. The vicar's wife met the child in the street, and as she did not curtsy, the vicar insisted that she should be flogged, and as the master would not comply, he has had to resign his office, and the girl has been turned out of the school. A more shameless piece of priestly tyranny has not come under our notice for a long time. Yet, when it was first reported, the *Spectator* thought it necessary to devote a long article to an extenuation of the vicar's conduct. Of course it had a theory of its own as to what had occurred, and equally, of course, the theory has turned out to be altogether contrary to facts. It must be said, in fairness, that the first report said that the child was in school when she refused to make the proper obeisance to the vicar's wife, and that the *Spectator* treated her conduct as a breach of school discipline and an act of disrespect to one of the school visitors. Even on this showing the action of the vicar was simply monstrous, and the defence of it was only a shade less offensive. When it came to know the facts, the *Spectator* had not a word more to say. But for its excessive zeal for the Establishment, it would not have been betrayed into such a blunder at all. As it stands, the case of the schoolmaster is singularly hard. If he had complied with the vicar's wishes he would have been liable to a prosecution for assault; as he refused, he has to lose his place. How long are these priests to lord it thus over the people, and the Government to uphold their petty tyranny?

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

Ernst Rietschel, the Sculptor, and the Lessons of his Life. By ANDREAS OPPERMAN. (Translated from the German by Mrs. G. STURGE.) London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price 5s.)

A HAPPY vein of German biography is just now finding an equally happy explorer and interpreter in Mrs. G. Sturge. The book before us is partly an autobiography, and partly a memoir of Rietschel, the great German sculptor—great in his genius and service as an exponent of art, great in his simplicity and nobility as a man. His name we fancy is not widely known in England, but visitors to Worms will recall the impression they received from the Luther monument, “that comprehensive monument of the Lutheran Reformation, in which the world-wide commotion in all its breadth and depth is summed up, and of which Luther’s statue is but the crowning figure.” They will remember the grand and solemn pose of the great Reformer, as he stands, “his eyes raised to heaven, his head firm and bold, the right foot a step in advance,” his clenched fist resting upon the Bible; beneath him the memorable words, “*Hier stehe ich,*” &c., “*Here I stand. I can no other. God help me! Amen.*” They will remember, too, the four statues that gather round Luther’s pedestal, statues of the originators of the work which Luther completed, “the unfolding leaves from which the flower is to burst forth”—Peter Waldo the Frank, John Wiclif the Englishman, Savonarola the Italian, and John Huss the Bohemian. The immense labour which this work involved, both in plan and in execution, affords some proof of the untiring perseverance and conscientious scrupulousness which characterised its author. Rietschel had to bear the keenest trial of the artist: this, his greatest work, was not finished before he died. He was so far satisfied, however, as to be able to gaze on the model of Luther from his easy chair in the garden a few days before his death. The com-

pletion of the monument was wisely entrusted to his pupils, Doundorf and Kietz, who had drunk the spirit of their master.

The autobiography with which the volume commences is charming in its naturalness and simplicity. It was not intended for publication, but written as a testament for his family. “I think,” says he, “there are many things in my life which may be profitable to my children.” And truly, if any modest account of determined self-culture under severe privations, of “plain living and high thinking” can help any of us—as we hope it helped his children—to set our faces against a life of apathy and self-indulgence, whether in poverty or wealth, this will do so. He was born of poor but honest and good parents; during his student life his personal expenses did not at times exceed a groschen a day; his lodgings consisted of one room in which he lived with the family, and in which, beside his partition bedroom, “there was at my disposal,” he says, “a window, with a table and a chair. It was so hot in summer that, had I known of their existence, it would have reminded me of the leaden roofs of Venice. In winter I was nearly frozen; there was often a crust of frozen breath upon the bed, and in snowstorms it was covered with fine snow that penetrated through the tiles.” In the Dresden Academy report of 1820 his name is mentioned with the following remarks: “This pupil is equally distinguished by poverty, talent, industry, and morality.” His constitution was by no means strong, but, in spite of it all, his contentment was unfailing. In his autobiography—the part of which relating to this period was unfortunately burnt in a fire at his father’s house—we find a sentence which gives us an insight into this side of his moral nature. “I do not pity any child for having been brought up in poverty and privation, so long as want, severity, or condescending pity do not stifle the better feelings, or make him abject.” Of his simplicity many instances

might be quoted. When a boy at school he was employed to give lessons in reading, writing, and drawing. "I was sometimes," he records in one place, "called in from the playground to this duty, and presented myself in costume which did not disparage me in the eyes of my pupils: a jacket of green cotton, with a small flower pattern upon it, and leather trousers. Cap and boots were superfluities in summer, and I went barefoot; boots were only worn on Sundays. In the same costume, after school, I gave the pastor's daughter lessons in reading and writing, and practised all the arts of praise and severity, even to the rap on the knuckles with the ruler." While he was a pupil under Rauch, his master, as he tells us, was on one occasion pleased with an "Apostle Paul" which Rietschel had modelled, and told him to make a "Peter" as a companion to it. The autobiographer adds: "Rauch afterwards had these and some other reliefs built into the wall of his landing, not because they were successful works, but they fitted the place, and decorated a blank wall." Later, he writes, after the Academies of Berlin and Vienna had nominated him as a member: "All things combine to make my position agreeable. I everywhere receive so many unmerited distinctions. I hope they will never make me swerve from the path which must be pursued in order to reach artistic and moral perfection. Sometimes, when these proofs of favour are heaped upon me, it alarms me. I will do what I can—that is, my duty—and thankfully accept success, never thinking that I have achieved anything extraordinary." He had a great aversion to journalistic applause, and seriously made it a condition "that no criticism or description of his work [the statue of Lessing] should appear in any journal." (There is a caste of this statue in the Crystal Palace.)

Of his perseverance and diligence we have already spoken. In consequence of King Louis' impatience "to achieve in art," as Rauch said, "what most of the other princes of Germany had left undone," there arose a style which was called the "Munich post-haste style," and Rietschel apprehended great danger

to himself from King Louis' patronage if he accepted it. He writes to Rauch: "There would be more opposition [at Munich] to the way in which I work and wish to work. My aim is, as far as in me lies, to perfect a subject, to make it what it ought to be as a plastic work of art. There I should be always working post-haste, which might make an inventive artist of me, but it would ruin me as a finished one."

Quite consistent with the above is his view of art and his mission in reference to it. In reply to Rauch's eulogium of Thorwaldsen, he writes: "It is, no doubt, a great and instructive gratification to wander about in Thorwaldsen's studio, and it must be impossible to leave it without great admiration for the master. Still, though a genius like his may produce, as if by magic, the most varied and beautiful forms to charm the senses and delight the eyes, there are others who, though not perhaps gifted with this brilliant facility, have with earnestness and perseverance acquired great mastery in art; who have renounced many of the pleasures of life in order to produce works which not only delight the connoisseur, but, what is more, are understood by the people, please, educate, and elevate them, and this is what gives real importance to a work of art. In my opinion they are quite worthy of a place beside the works of Thorwaldsen; nay, I maintain that, from a moral and Christian standpoint, they are above them. My opinion may be thought narrow, but never mind, I maintain that it is true." Elsewhere he says, that he does not wish to be called either a realist or an idealist: "What I wish is that ideal and representation should be in harmony. I employ nature; I never copy her. He only is a realist in a bad sense who copies nature without selection." As his biographer points out: "Art must study nature thoroughly, attain the mastery over it, in order to represent it as beauty freed from everything incidental;" "as the Greeks did, who almost copied her, yet impressed upon her the stamp of the divine."

Is it surprising to anyone that at the bottom of Rietschel's devotion to art was

the firm foundation of religious duty? It was so with Rauch, from whom he had learnt, and whom he far surpassed. At the age of seventy, just after his design for the monument of Frederic the Great had been accepted, Rauch wrote to his old pupil: "You alone can comprehend how this work fans the flickering flame of life, to enable me to accomplish the task by God's grace entrusted to me." And Rietschel himself in writing to Thäter, an old fellow-student, echoes the same religious feeling with increased distinctness: "Ah, Thäter, I feel all the blessedness, the consoling power of Christianity. I know that God has sent me many sun beams in the darkness of my sorrow, and only in Christianity do I see the anchor which will hold." And most sensible is his warning: "Let us keep our minds clear, and rejoice and be glad in what God has given us, and not put a veil before our eyes through which we can see all things dimly. . . . Christianity is so cheerful; . . . don't be turned aside from true Christianity by these austere people." Need we be astonished that to Rietschel is owing the revival of his art in Germany?

We have reviewed Rietschel's life at some length, but it was because we hoped to induce all who read what we have written, not only artists, but those who are longing, and those who as yet are not, to be able intelligently to present their lives a whole sacrifice to God, to make Rietschel their model. To them the great German sculptor—the contented poor man's child, the dutiful and loving son, the earnest, single-eyed student, the loyal pupil and friend, the affectionate husband and father, the simple-hearted noble Christian man, will be an instructive example and a divine inspiration.

The Kingdom of the Heavens. By FRANCIS JOHN BODFIELD HOOPER, B.A. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price, 10s. 6d.)

A LARGE and laborious volume, the primary object of which is "to show that the phrase of such frequent occurrence in the New Testament—the kingdom of the heavens"—denotes, not (as it is commonly said to do) the Church, or the

Christian Dispensation, but the Davidic Kingdom foretold by the Prophets—the millennial Messianic reign on earth of Christ and confessors after the second advent, conditionally appointed to take place in the Apostolic age." The writer examines all the passages in the New Testament which relate to the subject of the "Kingdom;" and whatever claims his conclusions may have on our assent, the book can hardly fail to be of use to any who happen to be specially interested in the questions discussed.

The Contemporary Review. March. London: Strahan & Co. (Price 2s. 6d.)

THE list of names on the cover of this month's *Contemporary* is less brilliant than that which has been secured by the *Nineteenth Century*; but most of the topics are interesting. Dr. Freeman's article on "Race and Language," Robert Buchanan's "Balder the Beautiful," will be certain to attract attention. The article on "The Progress of Religious Thought in Scotland," by Dr. Tulloch, is a fresh proof of the extent of the revolt in Scotland against the "Standards."

James Daryll. By RUTH ELLIOTT. London: James W. Allingham. (Price 3s.)

MISS ELLIOTT has written an interesting book, but it is a little difficult to understand for what class of readers she intended to write. The religious discussions which give to the book its chief interest are not very attractive to the kind of people that read story-books. We suspect that many young persons, attracted by the rather sensational opening of the first chapter, will "skip" most of the pages in which the writer has shown most of her power. The "religious novel" has a very definite type. If it runs on the traditional lines, and has a large amount of religious sentiment, it appears to command a wide constituency. It does for "Sunday reading" among those good people who put away their children's ordinary toys on Sunday, but who seem to think that a Noah's ark may be allowed without sanctioning Sabbath-breaking. But what these excellent persons will do

with "James Daryll" we hardly know. However, the book, though unequal, shows real power. We are half inclined to think that what the writer has to say might be better said in some other form; but as we are unacquainted with her other books, "Undeceived," "A Voice from the Sea," and "Margery's Christmas-Box," it is very possible that she may have powers as a writer of fiction which in "James Daryll" are clogged and fettered by her anxiety to deal with questions of theological controversy.

The Nineteenth Century. A Monthly Review. Edited by JAMES KNOWLES. No. I., March, 1877. London: H. S. King. (Price 2s. 6d.)

WE have no wish to pronounce any judgment in these pages on the very lively quarrel between Mr. Strahan and Mr. Knowles, which has issued in the starting of the *Nineteenth Century*, but we heartily congratulate Mr. Knowles on his first number. The team of contributors which he has got together is a guarantee of his success. He begins with a sonnet by Mr. Tennyson, and with articles by Mr. Gladstone, Cardinal Manning, Matthew Arnold, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baldwin Brown, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, Mr. Grant Duff, Mr. Croom Robertson, and Mr. Ralston. We have been particularly interested in Mr. Gladstone's article, which deserves careful thought. Mr. Arnold finds in Falkland a hero after his own heart, and dismisses Owen as "the dreariest of theologians," and Baxter as "the king of bores."

Sonnets, Songs, and Stories. By CORA KENNEDY AITKEN. Hodder and Stoughton.

THE most prominent feature of this little volume is its variety. Within the compass of some two hundred pages we have a drama, fifty or sixty sonnets, a good show of ballads, and a host of lyrics. To pass all these in review is more than our space will allow, and we must be content with a mere glance at the more important parts of the book.

"A Day in the Life of Mary Stuart" is the title of the drama. The scene is laid

at Holyrood, and "the day" is "the last day of January, 1567," rather more than a week before the king's tragical end. Miss Aitken has given us a fairly successful picture of Mary's desolation and despair, and has shown with considerable skill the revolt of the queen's nature against the gloomy asceticism of her Scotch subjects. But it is in the interview between Mary and her lover, Bothwell, at which Darnley's death was resolved upon, that the drama reaches its highest point, and it is here that we find the clearest signs of poetic power. But to our taste the "Sonnets for the People," with which the book opens, are far richer in thought and nobler in feeling. Miss Aitken asserts, and asserts justly, that in the present state of society, "God, more than Nature, needs interpreters," and though she can read Nature's inner meaning with an insight granted to few in our time, she spends her highest power in insisting upon national duties, and in branding national sins. Though these poems were written for Americans, English citizens, too, may learn a wholesome lesson from them. One of the best of the sonnets is dedicated to the memory of Charles Sumner, a true American patriot, whose death called forth a noble tribute from Longfellow. The two poems, though widely differing in thought and in expression, are knit together by a common feeling, and may worthily stand side by side. Longfellow's poem dwells on the light of Sumner's soul, Miss Aitken's sonnet on his purity.

We can only give one sonnet in full, and our choice is hard to make. We leave unnoticed several in no wise inferior to the one selected:—

"O ye who deem that poetry should be
Like dainty grass wherein to plant our
joys,
Upblooming fragrant to the light, while we
Go roaming thro' them ankle-deep in
noise
Of silvery laughter, ye refuse the rhymes
God puts into a singer's mouth who brings
A poetry of grief for grievous times;
Who takes no heed how sweet the robin
sings!

It sweetly, sweetly sings—ay, true ! But then

Robins have sweeter chroniclers to note
The bubbling music of the crimson
throat

Than I, who write to stir the hearts of
men.

And when a nation great like ours errs,
God, more than Nature, needs inter-
preters."

A second collection of sonnets, where a dead love is the theme, falls far below the first in every respect, and may be passed over without further notice. The lyrical poems are unequal. From simplicity and grace we pass to verses clumsy and harsh, and showing signs of careless haste. Here and there we had to read over a passage three or four times, before it would construe, and in some cases we gave up what seemed a hopeless task. Still, scattered up and down the volume, are most beautiful little poems, such as the one called "Poet's Song."

Lastly, we come to the translations from Victor Hugo's poems. The translator can claim much grace, for her task is no light one, as we have found from our own failures ; but no excuse can be made for blemishes like the following: *e.g.* "the royal beasts," for the king's horses ; or, "King of kings, whose *cortège* is the glorious sun and moon." And in the verse, "I love the early morning's divine light," the accent is barbarously placed. Nevertheless, the translation is often graceful and bold, and the beauties throw a veil over all defects. Miss Aitken's poetry has many charms, and with care and patience she will achieve a more complete success. Meanwhile, we thank her for what she has given us, with the hope of seeing more of her work at some future time.

We came across several misprints up and down the volume, a remarkable one among others. Miss Aitken describes English ivy as "swinging like *soft censors* (sic) from the trees." We feel conscious that we have been somewhat "soft censors" of the volume before us, but trust that our laxity does not deserve so sad a fate.

Congregational History, 1700-1800 in relation to Contemporaneous Events, &c. By JOHN WADDINGTON, D.D. London : Longmans, Green & Co. (Price, 15s.)

THE last instalment of Dr. Waddington's great work is not inferior in interest or value to either of its predecessors. The history of Congregationalism, both in England and in America, during the last century is full of practical lessons to Congregationalists in our own time. The labour in compiling this handsome volume must have been enormous. We earnestly trust that Congregationalists will show a generous appreciation of Dr. Waddington's patience and zeal. The book ought to be in every Congregational Book Society. Detailed criticism of a volume of upwards of seven hundred pages is impossible to us ; but we can assure our readers that the book is full of interesting and important information.

The Poppy Plague and England's Crime.
By J. B. F. TINLING, B.A. Stock.
1876.

MR. TINLING'S essay on the iniquitous opium policy of British India is many degrees superior to the generality of descriptions on such topics. It honestly states the facts all round, and really grapples with the immense practical difficulties in the way of an alteration of policy. This is high praise, but it is deserved ; and as Mr. Tinling desires to reach the public mind by his arguments, we wish for him a quick sale of this volume. The reader will find in it, moreover, a large mass of interesting information, not easily obtainable, on the interior life of both India and China. It is greatly to be regretted that the expected opportunity for discussing the frightful evil of the opium traffic did not occur at Bradford. All the more reason why the teachers of the people should make themselves acquainted with the subject through these able and trustworthy pages. The style of Mr. Tinling is that of an accomplished writer, who knows the advantage of advocating with calmness a cause which he would like to advocate with passionate fervour.

The Congregationalist.

MAY, 1877.

THE BLESSING OF BELLS.

A REMARKABLE ceremony, a revival or survival—we scarcely know which to call it—by no means creditable to the intelligence of the nineteenth century, took place recently at Birmingham. It is scarcely in such a place that we should expect to find, not merely lingering traces of old superstitions, but the plain and open avowal of a positive belief in them. In Birmingham, if anywhere, we should have supposed the once-prevalent faith in charms and other necromantic devices to be utterly exploded, and to be replaced by a reasonable and instructed appreciation of the facts of science as helping to interpret the laws of nature. Yet it is in Birmingham that we meet with an example which shows the existence of a superstitious belief not to be essentially distinguished from fortune-telling, divination, witchcraft, or demonology, and which testifies to a degree of ignorance absolutely inconceivable if the proof of it were not actually before us.

The best way of making our readers understand the case is to state it in the shortest and simplest way. There is in Birmingham a Roman Catholic Church known as St. Chad's Cathedral, it being the church of the Roman Catholic Bishop who takes charge of the members of his communion in the midland counties. Hitherto St. Chad's Cathedral has been deficient in the number of bells which a church of such importance should, it seems, possess. The peal has lately been made up to the proper number, and arrangements were consequently made to hang the new bells in the places left vacant for them. But before this could be done, it was considered necessary that the bells should be blessed. So, one morning in March, the Roman Catholic Bishop, Dr.

Ullathorne, his Vicar-General, Canon O'Sullivan, the provost of a neighbouring convent, several other canons, and a number of ordinary priests, came together for the purpose of blessing the bells; and a congregation of Roman Catholics, and some persons belonging to other sects, attended to witness the ceremony. In order that nothing of the designed effect might be lost, notice was given to the reporters, and next day an account of the blessing of the bells appeared in the Birmingham papers, to the edification of some readers, perhaps to the amusement of others, and to the amazement and saddening of more, for it is both amazing and saddening that responsible persons, Englishmen of education, and professed ministers of the Gospel of Christ, could lend their sanction to the ceremonies which took place, and to the opinions and beliefs implied by them.

Let it be understood that we are not making objection to the reverent use and handling of anything that is intended for use in the service of God in places appointed specially for worship. It is true that Nonconformists attach no peculiar sanctity to one building over another, and that they see neither edifying use nor scriptural warrant for services of consecration, such as are practised by the Greek, Anglican, and Roman Churches. But while declining to use these services, Nonconformists recognise the propriety of reverence in all that pertains to public worship, whether in its manner or in its means. Therefore if this Roman Catholic blessing of St. Chad's bells had been mere blessing in the sense of reverently dedicating such instruments to the Church's service, there would have been no need to speak of it, for however needless we may consider any such rite in itself, we have nothing to say against the spirit of it. We speak of it only because of the superstitious belief proclaimed by the actors in the ceremonial—a belief which seems to us to be not a little grotesque, degrading to those who profess it, dishonouring to Christianity, and dangerous because it opens the way to a revival of every superstition of the darkest and most corrupt ages of the world.

In order that we may not misrepresent anything that took place, we shall quote only from the official text of the service used. A copy of this now lies before us. It is described as "The Rite of the Blessing of a Bell, from the Roman Pontifical," and the text is given in Latin and in English in parallel columns. First there comes a rubric, as follows: "Before a bell is fixed in the belfry, it should be blessed according to the following rite: The Bishop, vested in a white cope, with mitre and pastoral staff, approaches the bell, and, being seated, recites, with the attending ministers, the following Psalms." These are Psalms l., liii., lvi., lxvi., lxix., lxxxv., and xcix. This recitation finished, "the Bishop rises, and standing with his mitre on, blesses salt and water," preparatory to washing the bells with the consecrated mixture. First, however, the

salt has to be exorcised, that is, evil spirits have to be driven out of it. To effect this object, the Bishop addresses the salt, saying to it :—

“ I exorcise thee, creature of salt, by the living ✠ God, by the true ✠ God, by the holy ✠ God, by God who by Eliseus the prophet bade thee be cast into the water, that the barrenness of the water might be healed : that thou mayest be made exorcised salt unto the salvation of them that believe, and mayest be unto all that take of thee health of soul and body ; and that from the place where thou shalt be sprinkled may fly away and depart every fantasy, and wickedness, and deceit of diabolical fraud, and every unclean spirit, being adjudged by Him who shall come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire.”

Then, laying aside his crosier and mitre, the Bishop says a prayer over the exorcised salt ; and having done so he puts on the mitre again, takes up the crosier, and proceeds to cast evil spirits out of the water, thus :—

“ I exorcise thee, creature of water, in the name of the ✠ Father Almighty, and in the name of Jesus Christ, His ✠ Son, our Lord, and in the virtue of the Holy ✠ Ghost, that thou mayest become exorcised water, to drive away all the power of the enemy, and mayest be able to root up and extirpate the enemy himself, with his apostate angels, by the virtue of the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire.”

Then, mitre and crosier once more laid aside, there follows a long and very curious prayer over the exorcised water, that it “ may receive the effect of divine grace, unto the driving away of demons and the banishment of diseases ; so that whatsoever this water shall sprinkle in the houses or places of the faithful may be freed from all uncleanness, may be delivered from harm, that therein no pestilent spirit may abide.” Then the prayer proceeds :—

“ Bless ✠ this water, O Lord, with a blessing from heaven, and may the virtue of the Holy Spirit come down upon it, that when this vessel [that is, the bell], which is prepared for summoning the children of Holy Church, hath been moistened with it, wherever this bell may sound, may the power of those who lie in ambush, the shadow of apparitions, the attack of whirlwinds, the striking of lightning, the ruin of thunderbolts, the calamity of tempests, and all spirits of storms be scared away ; and when Christian children hear its ringing, may an increase of devotion grow within them, that hastening to the bosom of holy Mother Church, they may there sing unto Thee in the assembly of the saints a new canticle, introducing in their music the marshalling sound of the trumpet, the sweet tones of the psaltery, the harmony of the organ, the cheerfulness of the drum, and the gladness of the cymbal.”

This prayer ended, then comes the mixture of salt and water, which appears to be an essential part of the ceremony. “ The Bishop,” we learn from the rubrical direction, “ puts salt into the water in the form

of a cross," saying at the same time, "let there be made a mingling of salt and water equally. In the name of the ✠ Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy ✠ Ghost." Wherever these crosses appear he makes the sign of the cross. Then, the mixture being made, and the incantation—for it is nothing less—having got so far, the Bishop's next proceeding is to pray that "this creature of salt and water" may be so blessed that "wherever it shall be sprinkled, by the invocation of Thy holy name, all the molestation of the unclean spirit may be removed, and the terror of the venomous serpent may be driven far away."

This is only the preparation. First the salt is exorcised, and made holy and free from satanic or demoniac influences. Next the water is treated in the same manner. Then the two are united, and supernatural powers are conferred upon them. They are now fitted for application to the sacred bells; for these also, when blessed and consecrated, are to become powerful spiritual agencies, as the reader will see directly. Let us get back to the rubric: "After this, the Bishop, having put on his mitre, begins to wash the bell with the water thus blessed, and the ministers continue the washing." Several psalms are sung while the washing progress is going on. The rubric tells us what is done next: "At the end of these psalms the Bishop rises, with his mitre on, and with the thumb of his right hand makes the sign of the cross on the outside of the bell, with the holy oil for the sick." Then he takes off his mitre, and prays, as follows: "Grant, we beseech Thee, that this vessel, prepared for Thy holy Church, may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit, that by its striking the faithful may be invited to receive their prize. And, when its melody sounds upon the ears of the people, may the devotion of faith grow up within them; may all the snares of the enemy be driven far away, the crashing of hail, the storm of whirlwinds, and the rush of tempests; may fatal thunderbolts be averted; the gushing of the winds be softened down healthily and gently; may the right hand of Thy power subdue the powers of the air, that when they hear this bell they may tremble and fly before the standard of the Holy Cross of Thy Son, which is marked upon it." Now comes in another ceremony. A little while ago the Bishop marked a cross upon the bell. Now he puts on his mitre, and "wipes off with a clean cloth the cross that he had made." Then follows the singing of an antiphon: "The voice of the Lord is upon many waters;" and then the 28th Psalm, which is followed by a repetition of the antiphon. Next, proceeds the rubric, "the Bishop makes, with the holy oil for the sick, seven crosses outside the bell, and four with chrism [*i.e.* the mixed, exorcised, and consecrated salt and water] inside." Then, taking off his mitre, he offers another prayer, for "a heavenly blessing upon this bell; that before its sound may be driven far away all the fiery darts of the enemy, the striking of thunder-

bolts, the fall of stones, the ruin of tempests," and an invocation that "when the present vessel is touched, like the other vessels of the altar, with sacred chrism, anointed with holy oil, whoever assemble at its sound may be free from all the temptations of the enemy, and ever follow the teaching of Catholic faith.

It might be supposed that the bell had received sufficient supernatural virtue by this time; but there is yet another function to be gone through. It is thus described in the rubrical directions: "The Bishop then sits down, and, having put on his mitre, places into the thurible [the incense burner] thyme, frankincense, and myrrh, or such of them as can be had. The thurible is then placed underneath the bell, so that the smoke may ascend into it." During this fumigation, the choir chant an antiphon and a psalm (the 76th), and, this over, "the Bishop rises, and, having taken off his mitre," says another prayer, that "whilst the sound of this vessel travels through the clouds, may the bands of angels save the assembly of the Church." Finally, the deacon, "vested in white," reads part of the 10th chapter of St. Luke's Gospel; and then, says the rubric, "the Bishop kisses the Book of the Gospels, and makes the sign of the cross upon the bell. He then retires to the sacristy, unvests, and goes away in peace." The reflection must be permitted: one wonders how he does it without laughing.

All the ceremonies, invocations, and incantations above described were duly and completely performed over the Birmingham bells by Bishop Ullathorne and his assistants; and now, if the proceeding has the virtue ascribed to it, the cathedral of St. Chad and the district adjoining are miraculously protected by a suspension of the laws of Nature in their especial favour. While St. Chad's bells are kept ringing, no demons or evil spirits can afflict the neighbourhood, no thunderbolts can fall, lightning can do no damage, the winds will blow more softly than elsewhere; and devotional feelings and "the teaching of Catholic faith" will fill all hearts. That is the express declaration of belief made by Bishop Ullathorne and his clergy, as prescribed for them in "The Rite of the Blessing of a Bell, from the Roman Pontifical." But, for one thing, we should be disposed to ask if these clergymen really do believe that a consecrated bell is capable of exercising the supernatural powers herein attributed to it—if they really are persuaded that thunder, and lightning, and wind, and evil spirits can be rendered harmless or may be driven away by the sounding of a hollow vessel of metal, which has been marked with the sign of the cross, anointed with oil, washed with a mixture of consecrated salt and water, and fumigated with the smoke of thyme, frankincense, and myrrh? The one thing which renders their faith possible is, of course, their unquestionable belief in the latest dogma of the Roman Church—the personal infallibility of the Pope.

Those who accept this can believe anything, however extravagant or superstitious ; and therefore we may conclude that the Roman Catholic ministers who took part in the strange ceremony above described are really convinced that every time a consecrated bell is rung the laws of Nature are suspended, and that a miracle is worked for the benefit of the faithful. Whether the benefit of the blessed bells extends beyond devout Roman Catholics, we are not in a position to say ; for they do not inform us, and nobody else knows anything about the business. It is presumable, however, that the safety and protection imparted by the ringing of consecrated bells are restricted to the faithful—that they are, so to speak, blessings localised as to the particular place, and personal as to believers. This distinction, of course, involves another miracle ; for it must be miraculous if the thunder, the lightning, the wind, and the evil spirits can be thus controlled for the benefit of a believer, and denied to an unbeliever standing next to him. But they may as well have the thing complete, for the one miracle is no more remarkable than the other.

To us, who stand outside the charmed circle—"charmed" in the true sense by mystic ceremonial and profuse incantation—the whole proceeding is a most pitiable display of superstition, repugnant to the simplicity of the Gospel, degrading to the profession of the Christian faith, dangerous to those who are taught to believe in it, by leading them to put their trust in idle and unmeaning forms and in mechanical aids, instead of relying upon the direct protection of God, and recognising His working through the natural laws by which He governs the world. Nothing brings home to us more forcibly the pretensions, the delusions, and the dangers of priestcraft, than such a ceremony as this ; nothing more clearly exhibits the manner in which Rome turns to her own purposes all Pagan usages and all human credulity. When we find such a ceremonial performed, and such professions of belief made, in the most enlightened of English towns, in the nineteenth century, we cannot wonder at what occurs in the darker places of the earth, under the supreme influence of the Roman Church—at the liquefying of the blood of St. Jannarius ; at the stigmata of Louise Lateau ; at the apparitions of the Virgin of La Salette.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

MAY 6.—“*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come.*”—1 Cor. xi. 26.

THE Lord's Supper is at once a token of love and a symbol of truth. Whatever else this sacrament may be, it is primarily the memento of a friend. Christ Himself, at its institution, said, “This do in remembrance of Me.” He was about to leave His disciples. He would, indeed, “come again and receive them unto Himself.” He would by and by “drink new wine with them in His Father's kingdom.” But, meanwhile, here was His parting keepsake, the memorial-token of His love, which would help, from time to time, to vivify their recollections of His friendship. And down through the ages has the sacrament come to ourselves, the present visible expression of our Saviour's affection. For we also are loved by Christ: He “tasted death for every man.”

This sacrament, however, is more than a token of love; it is also a symbol of truth. And in virtue of its symbolic significance it becomes a “showing of the Lord's death.” The bread and wine, representing His body and blood, are the visible emblems of His sacrifice on the cross. They are also symbolic of the relation of that sacrifice to human needs. Bread is for nourishment; wine is for exhilaration. Bread “strengtheneth,” and wine “maketh glad the heart of man.” Christ, especially in His death, which was the culmination of His redeeming work, is the “bread of life” and the wine of life to our souls. He Himself had said, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you;” and again, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven; . . . he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.” The Supper was simply Christ's own translation of these symbolic words into symbolic things and acts. The ideas expressed are essentially the same, that the Saviour Himself is the nutriment of our spiritual life, and that according as we appropriate Him by faith our souls live and thrive.

But the bread and wine of the Supper are set before us not merely to be looked at, as remembrancers of the Divine Friend and as emblems

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition; these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

of His life-giving death; they are also to be partaken of. Our "eating of this bread" and "drinking of this cup" are part of the symbolism. Thus the sacrament is not merely a proclamation by signs of the Lord's death, it is also a declaration by signs of our acceptance of His salvation; and therefore only those ought to come to the table who have already in spirit come to Christ. Our "eating of this bread" ought to indicate that our souls are nourishing themselves on the Redeemer. Our "drinking of this cup" ought to indicate that our souls are exhilarated and refreshed by the fruits of His sacrifice. For the wine of the Passover was a sign of festivity. The "cup of blessing" was a cup of joyful thanksgiving. Wine, indeed, may be terribly abused, but alas! is not this also true of the blood of Christ? When a man refuses to give up what he knows to be wrong, when he goes on sinning, and comforts himself with the thought that all his sins have been already punished on the cross,—what is this but drugging and stupefying his conscience with the "cup of salvation"? Whereas, to the penitent believer, the blood that was "shed for the remission of sins" is as a reviving cordial, "making the heart glad" with that "joy of the Lord" which is "our strength."

It is to be suspected that not a few Christians keep away from the Table of the Lord on account of a half-superstitious notion that this sacrament is shrouded in a mysterious and undefinable sanctity, into which they have no right to intrude; and especially the fear lest they might perchance "eat and drink unworthily" overcomes their desire to comply with Christ's injunction. They misunderstand the meaning of the Apostle. Those to whom Paul here writes were turning the Lord's Supper into an ordinary meal. It was no longer observed with becoming reverence; its symbolic meaning was not realised; it was no longer a solemn commemoration of Christ's death, or a significant expression of Christian fellowship. This desecration of the sacrament by turning it into an ordinary meal, and even into a selfish banquet, was the "unworthy" celebration of the Supper which was so severely condemned by the Apostle. It is an utter mistake to suppose that we ought to keep away from the Lord's Table until we feel ourselves worthy of the privilege, or until our character and conduct are fully worthy of our Christian profession. Our own personal worthiness is one thing; the worthy partaking of the sacrament is quite another thing. The Lord's Supper is not merely for the *élite* of the Church, for those who have attained to the higher stages of Christian life; it is for all genuine believers. And, indeed, a sense of our own unworthiness is one qualification for the worthy observance of the sacrament. The man who comes to the table with humble faith and penitence cannot "eat and drink unworthily;" for he will look with reverence through the symbols

to that sacred death which they commemorate, and that holy love which they declare.

On the other hand, there are those who keep away from the Lord's Table because they depreciate the sacrament, and perhaps even regard it as a somewhat childish ceremony. They remind us that we are saved by faith, and not by sacraments; that our spiritual life is not dependent, either for its production or its maintenance, on any external rite; and perhaps they add that the observance of the Supper is no longer binding upon us, although it was an institution appropriate enough to the period of the Church's childhood. Now, it is indeed true that no new idea is expressed, and far less any new blessing conveyed, by the symbolism of the Supper. But that which is not necessary to spiritual life may nevertheless be most helpful; and visible signs may aid us in realising more vividly the ideas expressed and the blessings conveyed in the Gospel. When the mother would kiss her son, shall the son draw back and say, "I can love you, and can trust your love, without any kiss"? And let us take care how we pride ourselves too soon on a Christian maturity that can afford to dispense with symbols. Even "till the Lord come"—till we see Him "face to face"—we may well avail ourselves of the help to faith which the Lord's Supper affords. The very peculiarity of the emblems is fitted to arrest thought and to quicken emotion. The solemn and far-reaching import of the ideas it enshrines delivers it from any aspect of childishness, whilst its very simplicity is even a relief to the manly who are willing to be childlike. And it Christ Himself could say, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer," we, too, may find that the symbols which speak to us of God's redeeming grace may sometimes help to prepare us also for the sorrow of Gethsemane.

MAY 13.—"*He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.*"—Matt. xxvi. 42.

The whole scene of Christ's Agony in the Garden is somewhat at variance with our popular ideals of heroism. There are not a few who, in their secret hearts, would have admired Jesus more if He had gone forward to the death of the Cross without any such shrinking, or, at least, without any such manifestation of shrinking. Now, doubtless, there are profound depths in this Agony of Christ which it may be impossible for us to fathom. Nor is it by any means certain that the "cup" which our Lord prayed might pass away from Him was the death to which He had so long been looking forward. It may, perhaps, have been simply the cup of present anguish, due to the horror and recoil experienced by Him now that He was coming into the

chill shadow of the Cross. But, in any case, the very reason why Christ seems to come short of the ordinary human ideal of heroism may just be because He was so perfectly human, so thoroughly sincere, so intensely loving, so divinely good. The very purity and depth of His nature may have been the secret of His intense agitation.

Magnanimity is nobler than mere equanimity. There is more room for fluctuation in great than in little souls. The pool may be but slightly ruffled, when the ocean is heaving with its billows. The Red Indian has no Gethsemane; he meets his doom without the quiver of a muscle, lest his enemies should gloat over his weakness. Socrates takes the cup of poison with a calm smile upon his face, and drinks it off with philosophical composure. Many a Christian martyr has met death with perfect serenity, and even with triumphant joy. Was Christ, then, less courageous and heroic than these? No; but the very greatness and perfection of His divine humanity brought Him into depths of anguish to which others are strangers. It is the stoical pride of the Indian which enables him to endure so unflinchingly the tortures inflicted by his foes; but such pride would have marred the character of Jesus. Is it such a noble thing to have the natural shrinking from pain or death overborne and held under by an intense hatred and contempt for those who are inflicting it? No doubt there is a certain grandeur about such an attitude; and we can scarcely help admiring it, even as we might admire the strength and daring of a lion at bay; but when a noble, sensitive, loving-hearted man is hunted to death, his courage may well take another form than that of a lion or a savage. Socrates was a great philosopher; and when we think of the light he had, we may well admire the calmness of his death; but if his heart had been filled with a holy concern for those who were condemning him, his final composure might have been preceded by a heavy sorrow.

It is quite a mistake to suppose that contempt of or indifference to death is necessarily the mark of a lofty soul. It is long since the psalmist observed concerning the wicked, that "there are no bands in their death." The attitude of a man towards death depends on many points—physical temperament, power of imagination, sensitiveness of spirit, conditions of circumstance and relationship, moral and spiritual character. In the sinless soul of Christ the instinctive clinging to life which is natural to humanity must have existed in purity and strength, and would be even intensified by His joy in God and in nature. The natural recoil from death could not in His case be overborne by any pride or callousness. Then, too, the death which was before Him was one of ignominy, and was about to be inflicted by those whom He loved. Christ cared for their esteem and thirsted for their affection; and yet they were thirsting for His blood. True, "for the joy that

was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame ;" but He did not despise those who put Him to shame. And if a man were being murdered by a brother whom he loved, should we admire him the more for going down into *such* a death without any horror or anguish?

Then, again, with regard to those Christian martyrs who have met their end with a kind of holy ecstasy, we must remember that their gaze was often narrowed to one view of death: it was to them but the nearest way to the heavenly crown. And doubtless it was well for them that it was so; for, being but imperfect men, a wider outlook might have lessened their power of endurance; whereas their holy, passionate excitement seems often to have swallowed up all the natural bitterness of martyrdom. But Christ was the perfect man. To His deeper and wider nature death presented itself in many aspects, and all natural emotion had freer and fuller scope. He realised what death was to a pure and unselfish love of life, and He felt too,—as no martyr ever could feel it,—the guilt of those who were about to crucify Him. There is a real and true sense in which the sin of the world lay as a burden on the sinless "Lamb of God;" and His horror in the presence of death was a horror in the presence of human guilt. Thus to the greater nature of Christ, and especially to Christ as the High Priest of mankind, death was far more than simply His way home to glory.

But amid all this agony in the Garden, Christ still clung by faith to His Father. Beneath all the terrible agitation lay the peace of His filial confidence. There is no proof that this confidence ever wavered. He trusted His Father sufficiently to lay His natural desire before Him. And if the "cup" must be drunk, it was as a cup given Him by *the Father's hand* that He was prepared to drink it. The prayer of faith had its issue in utter filial resignation. And being strengthened through and after this prayer, His deep, underlying peace of spirit rises once more to the surface, and presently manifests itself in the outward and majestic calm with which He goes forth to meet the traitor and his band: "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me."

MAY 20.—"*Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*"—Psalm xli. 9.

The treachery of Judas was not the least bitter ingredient in Christ's cup of suffering. The thought that one of His chosen disciples and companions, who had been admitted by Himself into the privacy of intimate converse, was about to betray Him into the hands of His enemies, brought a keen pang to the sensitive and loving heart of the Redeemer. It troubled Jesus even amid the holy calm of the Last

Supper, until the traitor had taken his dark and discordant presence out into the "night." The coming treachery seems to have cast its shadow for some time beforehand on the soul of Christ; He had detected the malignity that was growing out of disappointed covetousness. And it was after washing His disciples' feet, that, with reference to the one soul amongst them who still remained unclean, He quoted this word of the old Psalm: "He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me."

The Psalm itself was perhaps written by David, and possibly the primary reference of this text may have been to the treachery of Ahitophel. The Psalmist describes himself as lying on a "bed of sickness," and describes his enemies as "speaking evil of him," and as desiring and predicting his death. It is as heightening this picture of calamity that he adds the touch of the unfaithful "friend." And indeed, the open hatred and antagonism of an enemy are more easily borne than the secret treachery of one whom we have "trusted." We weep over the grave of a departed friend; but the grave of a murdered friendship is a far sadder sight. And in proportion to the faithfulness and tenderness of our own hearts, is the keenness of the pang inflicted upon us by any such outrage on the sanctities of affection.

This bitter human experience was indeed "fulfilled"—filled up to the full—in the case of Jesus. When we think of the love which He must have had for Judas, of His earnest desire to save the man from the avarice which was undermining his character and hardening his heart, we can conceive how great must have been His sorrow when He found that all His love was repaid by a deepening hatred. The theory that Judas was merely an impatient and selfish blunderer, who wished to precipitate his master into a speedier establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, does not accord with the strong language in which Christ Himself speaks of the traitor. Indeed, according to this theory, the treachery of Judas was only seeming; his object was not to help Christ's enemies to destroy Him, but only to compel Christ the sooner to destroy them. It may be said that his motive was altogether selfish, that he wished to obtain the more speedily some post of authority or wealth in the new Messianic kingdom. But how could he reasonably expect ever to obtain such a post, if he were thus now to play the part of an enemy? No, we seem shut up to the terrible conclusion that Judas, when he saw that it was no part of Christ's plan to set up a worldly kingdom, began to dislike his Master. The whole spirit of Jesus was virtually a constant condemnation of his own covetousness; and so his attachment passed into aversion, and aversion into hostility, until he became, as Christ said, "a devil." The malice which was thus concealing itself under the guise of pretended friendship, which

had "covenanted with the priests for thirty pieces of silver," and yet had the audacity to present itself in the inner circle of love, must have been unspeakably painful to the heart of Jesus. But "in all points it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren." He had to sound the depths of human suffering. And so it was permitted that "in enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself," He should be called to endure even the traitor's kiss.

MAY 27.—"*For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your minds.*"—Hebrews xii. 3.

The writer of this Epistle is here directing our eyes to Christ as our example. He has already cited from the Old Testament history many illustrations of the power of faith. But at the head of the great "cloud of witnesses" he places Jesus Himself. Jesus is "the faithful and true Witness." "Before Pontius Pilate He witnessed a good confession." In Him the spirit of faith reached its perfection. Our Redeemer is indeed more than our Exemplar; but He *is* our Exemplar, and His example is part of His redeeming work. We are therefore to keep "looking unto Jesus" as "the Prince and perfecter of faith." And here, in this text, we are exhorted to "consider" especially His example of patience in "enduring" the antagonism of sinners.

There are indeed those who tell us that our belief in the Divinity of Christ robs His example of all practical power and value. They allege that it is a kind of mockery to ask us, who are so laden with infirmities, who are so entirely and weakly human, to copy One who was not only human but Divine. And this is a favourite argument even of those who, whilst rejecting the doctrine of Christ's Divinity, nevertheless accept the records of the supernatural in His history. They believe that Jesus was the miraculously-attested Messiah—created, commissioned, and gifted by God to be the Teacher and Exemplar, and thus the Saviour, of the world. But they tell us that they make the example of Jesus much more practically valuable when they bid us imitate one who was simply a man like ourselves.

Now, even from their own point of view, is there so much gained after all? Is this Christ, on their own showing, "simply a man like ourselves"? They admit that He had no human father, that He was sinless in His nature and His life, that He was specially inspired, that He wrought miracles, that He rose from the dead. And now, when we are exhorted to copy the goodness of this Christ, it is supposed that a great deal is gained by insisting that He was merely a man like ourselves. If you ask me to lift a pair of heavy gates on my shoulders, do you make it easier by telling me that Samson was merely a man? If you

bid me write a tragedy like *Hamlet*, or an oratorio like the *Elijah*, is it any help to tell me that Shakespeare and Mendelssohn were but human? And if you bid me "follow the steps" of Jesus, do you make the task easier by telling me that Jesus was a mere man? If He was a mere man, still He was the Christ, to whom "the Holy Spirit was not given by measure," and who was brought into the closest union with God by the very consciousness of His mission as the Saviour of the world.

Of course it may be replied: There is a distinction between gifts and graces. We can imitate goodness, but not genius. We can copy anything that was good in the character of Shakespeare or of Mendelssohn, although we may not be able to imitate the works due to their distinctive gifts. And so we may copy the moral goodness of Jesus, although we are not called to be Messiahs, or to emulate His prophetic gifts and deeds.

Very true. And does goodness cease to be imitable merely because it exists in One who is superhuman? We are told that the extraordinary inspiration and miraculous powers of the Messiah did not make His temptations unreal. We believe it; and we believe further that neither did His Divine nature make His temptations unreal. Nay, more; there are even certain aspects in which a Divine or superhuman example may, for purposes of inspiration and help, be *more* cogent than one that is purely human. When Paul exhorts us to be "imitators of God, as dear children," is it not implied that, in realising our filial relationship to the Supreme, there is a power to inspire Godlike character and action? And does not Jesus Himself bid us complete our character after the pattern of completeness which we see in God? "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you . . . that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good." Clearly, Jesus did not share the belief that a Divine example is of no practical value.

The fact is, that example is sometimes more powerful, in proportion as it is set by those who are higher and greater than ourselves. No doubt if you ask a boy to lift a hundredweight, the fact that his father (who is a strong man) can do it is no encouragement in the way of example. But suppose it is a question, not of lifting a heavy weight, but of lifting a little stone out of the way of a toddling baby who might stumble over it, and suppose our young master thinks it too much trouble or too much condescension to pick up that stone. Suppose now his father rushes forward, and (strong man though he be) stoops down to remove that little stone out of the way, is not this example more powerful over the boy than if it had been set him by his brother? In like manner, surely the example of humility set before us in Christ

becomes far more impressive in the light of the Incarnation. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God . . . took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." And surely also when we "consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself," the recollection that He was the sinless Son of God may well add cogency to His example of patience.

For consider what a claim *He* had on the loyalty of the very men who were spitting upon Him, mocking Him, crucifying Him. Consider how the loveliness of His character and the goodness of His life ought to have won their admiration and their affection. Consider how loathsome and intolerable their sin must have been to His perfect purity. And then consider with what sublime meekness and patience He bore all their insult, hatred, and cruelty. Consider how He, who Himself needed no forgiveness, prayed that His murderers might be forgiven. Surely such an example of endurance, given us by the "Lord of glory," may well inspire us with some power to bear "the contradiction of sinners," when we remember that *we* have no such claims on their admiration or love, that our very imperfections may often lead to our being misunderstood, and that in the sight of the Holy God we ourselves are "sinners" who need forgiveness.

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CHURCH ADMINISTRATION.

II.—DISTRIBUTION OF DIACONAL DUTIES. CONJOINT SERVICES.

DEACONS' MEETINGS.

V. **T**HE appointment of a treasurer to the Church is not the least important duty of its members. Some monetary arrangements must be made by the most spiritual community in Christendom. Expenditure, for various purposes, it is absolutely impossible to avoid, if a Church observe the Apostolic injunction to "provide things honest in the sight of all men."

One of the offices, therefore, usually and properly held by a deacon, will be that of treasurer to the Church, by whom all the contributions for public worship—that is, monies raised to meet the stipend of the minister, and the various incidental expenses incurred in conducting the services of the house of God—will be received and disbursed. In his ledger * will be entered the name and residence of every seatholder,

* Specially-prepared books for this and other Church purposes are to be obtained in London, at the offices of the publishers of this periodical. These greatly simplify and diminish the labours of a treasurer.

with the fact of the payment of his seat-rent, when, on the day fixed for its reception, the amount is handed in to the persons appointed to receive it. Receipts for such monies will be given on the first convenient occasion. Whether the revenue of any place is raised by pew-rents, with fixed prices attached to them, and a graduated scale is adopted to meet the different pecuniary capabilities of the seat-holders, or the amount of contribution is left to the free determination of each hearer, or any other mode, such as the weekly offering, is chosen for securing the necessary funds,—the duties of a treasurer will be found to be of importance. And when also it is remembered that by him all payments to the minister have to be made, as well as to the various persons employed in the church, such as organist, chapel-keepers, pew-openers, &c., and that he is to discharge all tradesmen's bills, it is certain that, in a large congregation, the office of a treasurer will prove no sinecure.

From what has been stated, it will be seen that there is a large amount of purely clerical service required, in the discharge of this official duty. In addition to the treasurer, therefore, it may be necessary to obtain help from one or two others of the official brethren, by whom it might be arranged to attend, the one to the area, the other to the galleries, of a church. These will keep a list of present seatholders, with the prices of the pews, and a tabular account of those that are let, and of such as are vacant. Along with the quarterly notices sent out by them will be envelopes or papers, for the return of the money due. These will be placed in the pews the Sabbath before every quarter-day; and on the Sunday immediately following, the deacons at the doors of the church will receive the papers returned, with the amount enclosed. This may be done in the quietest manner possible. Those who have tried the plan for many years aver that it entails no difficulty, except that it makes a somewhat large demand on the time of the officers; while the general regularity with which the seat-rents are collected, without a word ever being said from the pulpit about it—a most desirable thing, for many reasons—is both gratifying to the treasurer, and to those who look to him for payment. Generally on the first Sabbath after the delivery of the pew notices, half of the contributions are received; by the next, a moiety of the remaining half, and before a month is past very few remain unsent. There will, however, always be some good people troubled with short memories, who will render it necessary to issue a second notice, which, if not attended to should lead to inquiry, as to the probability of seat-holders having left, without giving, as is expected and asked, notice of so doing; or to a little quiet pressure, to remind them that the treasurer's account for the quarter is waiting to be closed.

Inattention to the second notice should be speedily followed by a third, which should unequivocally state that it is *final*; and that if no response is made to it within a month, this will be regarded as indicating the relinquishment of the sittings; and that they will be let, without any hesitation or delay, to the next comer.

As in most Churches—in all well-ordered ones—pew-rents or offerings are paid in advance, at the commencement of every quarter the treasurer will, unless payments are delayed unconscionably, always have monies in hand, wherewith to meet the several salaries. In the case of a minister, experience has proved that he can be paid without much difficulty, every half quarter. A fixed sum will be settled on beforehand, whether he receive a regular stipend, or is merely the recipient of the proceeds of the place. A few months will soon enable the officers of a Church to calculate the minimum which will regulate the payment, it being easy enough to hand over any surplus at the end of the financial year to the minister.

VI. *Conjoint Services*.—But besides such special and distributive official acts as have been adverted to, the deacons, as a body, have to consider all matters relating to the worship of the house of God, its various religious services, ordinary and extraordinary. In consultation with them, the minister will make such arrangements as to the form to be adopted in the conduct of religious exercises as shall appear most suited to the circumstances of the people, and tend most to their spiritual edification. This is a matter of great moment, to which earnest attention should be given. Uniformity in this particular, among our Free Churches, even if it were desirable, could never be secured. That which is imperative is that “all things be done decently and in order.”

Special sermons and meetings have to be fixed, and in a wisely-managed Church this will be done at the close of one year, for the whole of the next; fixed times being selected for regularly recurring appeals for specific objects, either for congregational purposes, or home and foreign missions, or for benevolent and philanthropic enterprises.

The deacons, as co-workers with the minister, will arrange for attendance at the several services, on the Sabbath and weekday. It may be difficult for all to be at their post every time the church is opened for public worship; so that arrangements are often made, and wisely so, for a division of the duties connected with public worship. The names of the officers, the occasions and dates of their expected attendance should be tabulated, and hung up in the vestry, and one or more, as the numbers will admit, be bound to be there, or see that there is a substitute. There are circumstances constantly occurring which necessitate that someone besides the minister should be present, to whom appeal

can be made for counsel and aid in judgments and decisions, as for example, applications for the use of the church or the school for any public and beneficial purpose. These should never be left to the minister alone for decision. It is the province of all the officers to consider such applications, as the representatives of the Church and trustees, to whom they are accountable for the wise discharge of this duty.

Deacons should see to the circulation of intelligence—congregational, ecclesiastical, and missionary. Hence some Churches have an officer for literature, by whom the various periodicals and papers, which advocate the great principles of civil and religious liberty, and which seek to diffuse intelligence, and present the great truths of the Gospel in a popular form, shall be brought before the people. It is increasingly important to keep them abreast of the great ecclesiastical and religious questions of the day, which thus, by means of the press, as well as the pulpit and the platform, are brought prominently and frequently before them.*

Our Churches are sadly negligent of this means for the diffusion of scriptural views of the kingdom of Christ, and are not sufficiently impressed with a sense of the duty which devolves upon them to understand their own principles and aim at their propagation; and thus the loose hold these principles have on many who profess to have embraced them.

The annual Report which some Churches publish of their proceedings and contributions during the past year should be prepared by the deacons, or at least the minister be aided by them in the preparation of it. Such a Report or Manual will contain an account of the various institutions connected with the congregation, a short statement of the object of each, and the lists of subscriptions, [so as, in the case of societies, like the London Missionary, the Bible Society, Home Missions, &c. to prevent the necessity for printing a long list of subscribers in the reports of the parent institutions, which adds seriously to the cost of their production.

In this Manual, from time to time, it is well that an address on spiritual matters should be inserted, and also appeals to increased liberality presented, in order to stir up the people's minds by way of remembrance, that they may consider afresh the claims of the various societies which ask their support, a task by no means unnecessary in the most active and liberal Churches. Inside the cover of this Manual there should be printed a list of all the special services, sermons, prayer-meetings, &c.; and of the collections for the whole year. On the fly-leaf

* A good hint: if it were taken, the circulation of the CONGREGATIONALIST might be doubled.—ED.

of the title-page, the names and residences of minister and deacons can be printed, together with the times of the services on Sabbath and week-days, as well as of the Bible-classes and the schools; and also notices relative to marriages and baptisms, which may be of service to those who are likely to be interested in these matters.

It may not be amiss to add, as deserving the attention of Church officers, that no small advantage has resulted from their personal efforts to afford accommodation to strangers visiting a place of worship. There is nothing more derogatory in serving pews than there is in serving tables. "A doorkeeper in the house of the Lord" was, by one, high in position, deemed an enviable post. Respectful attention to strangers is never lost upon them, while indifference, or studied neglect exhibited towards them, and which they correctly interpret as discourtesy, produces a bad effect, and discourages a repetition of the visit. Such inattention on the part of private members of the congregation might be partially excused, on the ground of their ignorance of the seats where they might venture to place visitors, without a danger of selecting those which were awaiting their regular occupants, though there would be nothing to prevent their giving up their own sittings for the occasion. But the officers of the Church are presumed to know better where there are, or are likely to be, temporary vacancies, which they need not hesitate to fill, and which their official position would give them the liberty and the right to do.

The Apostolic injunction, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares," is not to be confined to social hospitality; it may well apply to the house of the Lord.

The discharge of this service will make the deacons familiar with the faces of many who habitually frequent their place of worship, but who seem to be remarkably oblivious of the fact that to sustain divine ordinances, and afford the attendants upon them all the accommodation and teaching and privileges there enjoyed, involves a large amount of expenditure, for which our Free Churches are entirely dependent upon the offerings of the people who enjoy them. From casual visitors, and from the truly poor, it would neither be wise nor right to look for any such support; but when, as is too often the case, persons of an apparently respectable social position attend for many months, and with regularity, it is unquestionably the duty of the deacons courteously to speak to such, and suggest their sharing in the burden of maintaining a ministry, which, judging from their frequent and even constant attendance for a lengthened period, seems to have commended itself to them. Not a few will be found to have acted as these have done from simple want of thought, and perchance from ignorance of our Nonconformist mode of sustentation, especially if such persons have been in the habit

of attending a well-endowed parish church, where no appeal was ever made for monetary assistance in the maintenance of worship.

While the minister and deacons are *ex-officio* members of all committees formed in connection with schemes of usefulness adopted and carried out by a Church, it is well for one or more of them to be selected as *special* representatives, and to be identified *officially* with such organisations as Sunday-schools, missionary societies, young men's associations, &c.

There is then a guarantee for the harmonious working of the several agencies; and the weight attached to the opinion of such official persons will tend to sound judgment in the arrangement of the details of business, and prevent what, without any design, might unconsciously occur,—a jar in some portions of the working machinery.

I am perfectly aware that in all that has been written relative to the distribution of diaconal duties, it is assumed that there will be at least from five to eight officers by whom such duties can be discharged. It may, therefore, with great propriety be objected, that such details of service can only be carried out in a large Church, with a large diaconate, but that as a vast number of our congregations are not of this extensive character, these arrangements cannot be effected. This is true, and the only thing that can be done is to blend two or three of these special offices together. If the Church increase, naturally the number of its officers will also increase, and the larger demands made upon their time and attention will, of necessity, lead to the subdivision of labour that is advocated.

Deacons' Meetings.—With such a variety of service as these brethren have to render to the Master and His people, it will be an essential preliminary to united and effective action, that they often take counsel together, on the various matters connected with the wise government and well-being of the Christian community “over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers;” and earnestly commend themselves and their charge to the guidance and grace of the Great Head of the Church; so that deacons' meetings must be a recognised and regular arrangement. At least once a month the business of the Church, both as to its spiritual and secular affairs, will require their attention, and times will present themselves when the ordinary meeting will become extraordinary, when for a whole evening different subjects will demand their grave and prayerful deliberations.

Even if no routine business summoned them together, the sacred relations they sustain to their Master and their fellow-servants should lead to these monthly gatherings, that the interests of all may be borne on their hearts, in fervent supplications at the throne of grace. Perhaps those honoured brethren may never more effectively promote the

prosperity and peace of the Church, than when they do the very thing for which, because of the inopportuneness of the act, Jehovah rebuked Moses, in the front of the Red Sea (Exodus .xiv. 15). Prostration in prayer, if it hinder imperatively demanded action, is not acceptable to the mind of God. But it may be that when the officers of a Church pause in a course of action, to bring all their solitudes in relation to it before their Divine Lord, and are more desirous for the display of His grace and omnipotence than for the mere concurrence of men, and so by impassioned prayer lay hold of the strength and wisdom of God, they will do more for the highest welfare of that Church than the most well-timed and energetic measures of their own would accomplish. "Bowing their knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," may prove of more efficient service than working with their own heads and hands, or securing the heartiest co-operation of their brethren. Then when individual and united action follow, it will be more effectual, in proportion to the fervour of the devotions with which it has been preceded. The strength of the messenger of God from heaven, and the wielder of a delegated power before which all opposition is useless, is better than the might of armies; and bolts and bars—difficulties that hem in the servants of God—are made to yield before the holy force which is put in motion by the breath of prayer.

Convenience must decide where and when deacons' meetings shall be held: the ordinary ones may take place in the church, for which in the construction of the building convenient arrangements should be made, by the erection of a minister's or deacons' vestry; extraordinary ones, involving three or four hours of conference, had better be held at the houses of the officers in turn.

In these private gatherings, subjects can be discussed which it would be both unwise and ineffective to consider in a larger assembly. The propriety or impropriety of the introduction of some matters at all into the meetings of the Church, will at times require serious consideration, lest, even with the most laudable desires to promote the peace and welfare of a Christian community, both should be perilled. The judgment of four, or six, or eight men, whose experience both in secular and spiritual affairs will stand in good stead, in relation to such subjects, will rarely be questioned by the thoughtful and prudent among the members; and to attempt to legislate, so as to please such as are thoughtless and inexperienced, would be an act of insufferable folly. Hence these diaconal gatherings should be conscientiously attended, as useful and necessary preparations for the larger and more public meetings of the members of the Church.

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MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

THERE is no point on which Churchmen seem so unable to comprehend Congregationalists as on that of elections to the pastorate. Looking at the admitted evils which result from the methods at present in vogue in the Establishment, including the "system of purchase,"—methods as contrary to common sense as to scripture,—it might have been thought that Church reformers would have looked favourably at the idea of a choice by the congregation. But, strange to say, the very opposite is the case, and the one consolation which they seem to find in their own shame and humiliation is that, after all, they are not as other men, and especially not like those religious democrats, the Congregationalists.

Thus the Bishop of Peterborough, after an enumeration of abuses, so flagrant that any remedy would seem preferable to their continuance, proceeded immediately to disclaim the idea of "popular election," and to draw a fancy picture of the evils with which it is accompanied, which might satisfy an audience predisposed in favour of his views, that there might be something worse than even the simony, the corruption, the utter indifference to the good of the people and the spiritual interests of the Church, which, as he had been compelled to admit, are found under the system of patronage. The "vulgar greed and coarse puffery of clerical agents," who carry on a traffic which "offends the moral sense of the community;" the scandal of "presentations effected through the medium of a broker in a back street in London, selling benefices across the counter as he might sell so many forfeited pledges;" the prevalence of a state of feeling under which "the law of simony has thus, as it were, slipped from off its moral basis, and been broken into shapeless fragments in its fall;" the existence of "smouldering indignation," and "chronic discontent and alienation for the Church," in parishes into which the patron has inducted the oldest man he could find, "in order to sell the living over his head;" the "existing anomalous privileges attaching to donative benefices," over the presentation to which the Bishop does not exercise even that limited supervision which may act as a check, though an imperfect one, in the case of other presentations,—surely furnish a sufficiently long catalogue of evils.

Yet on this bare enumeration they do not appear in the worst aspects in which the Bishop himself has had to deal with them. His plain statement in his charge to the clergy of his diocese gives a far more terrible picture. It has frequently been quoted, but

we make no apology for repeating what really needs to be kept before the mind of the people, in the hope that it may act as a healthful stimulus to the conscience of all true-hearted Christians: "Since I have been a Bishop, I have been called to institute four clergymen, of whom one was paralysed, and another was so infirm that on the ground of his age and infirmity he asked me for perpetual leave of absence from the important parish to which I had just appointed him; the third was a reclaimed drunkard, who was presented to a benefice situated only a few miles out of the scenes of his former intemperance, where the scandal of it was notorious; and the fourth—I can hardly bring myself to say it—had resigned a public office he had formerly held, sooner than face an investigation into a charge of the most fearful immorality, and the truth of which he could not deny to me."

It is with the knowledge of such damning facts, and with the bitter consciousness of his own inability, bishop though he is, to interpose any effectual check, that the Bishop can nevertheless say, "Popular election is, in my opinion, the very worst possible mode of appointing ministers."

What! my lord, worse than that which compelled you to play an unwilling part in a proceeding which you felt to be a humiliation to your office, and a disgrace to the very name of religion? What!—worse than a method which leaves the chief ministers of the Church, set for its guidance and defence, absolutely without power to prevent the institution of clergymen whose physical infirmities make their appointment a mockery, or, what is worse, whose shameless moral delinquencies convert it into a burning disgrace? What!—worse than a system, honeycombed with all varieties of art and device, for the purpose of turning the cure of human souls into a mere article of barter? Falsehood, or what bears an alarming resemblance to it, and intrigue in the evasion of law; the conversion of solemn declarations into mere forms of words, not worth the parchment on which they may be written; the utter contempt of the great ends for which the ministry of the Gospel exists; the scandalous prostitution of rites and services, which all Christian men must hold in profoundest reverence; the "abomination of desolation" thrust into the holy place,—what can be worse? The marvel to us is, that the good men who are in the Church have not long since risen up, and in words breathing a determination not to be mistaken, insisted that there should be a reform. But their endurance is more intelligible when a Bishop who himself furnished the most terrible revelations, in the very same breath in which he publishes the shame of his order and his Church, declares that there is something worse, and that is a system of popular election.

It is clear that his lordship, with all his ability, was talking of a subject about which he knew little or nothing. His objection on the ground of principle is simply ludicrous. He coolly says: "As to non-intrusion, which is supposed to be the special and peculiar advantage of the election of ministers by the people, this is another fallacy. Non-intrusion will follow from popular election only in the very rare cases where the electors are unanimous in their choice. When they are not, the majority selects a pastor for the minority, quite as much as ever patron does for a parish." Of course, whenever a body of men have to pronounce a judgment or make a choice, there will probably be diversity of opinion, and the decision must rest with the majority. But would anyone undertake, on this account, to deny that the man fairly elected by the majority of a constituency is its representative, still more to assert that he had been forced upon it? A daring paradox of this kind, however, is not without its uses. Its very impudence tells in its favour, and leads many who at first are startled by its audacity to fancy that there must be something in it. It is not often, indeed, that it is ventured upon in civil or political matters. Even a Tory duke would hardly maintain in serious earnest, and in an assembly where he might be answered, that the principle of "non-intrusion" was no more violated in a borough where a landlord relieves the constituency of choosing a representative by appointing a nominee of his own, than in one where the electors make their own choice, but where of course the majority is supreme. But if in these days some wild reactionary might be found to venture on such a statement, there can be no doubt as to the reception with which it would meet. It is in Church affairs only that assertions which run so directly athwart common sense and experience pass muster, and even in relation to them it needs the authority of a Bishop, or some high ecclesiastical dignitary, to secure them currency. The Bishop was cheered, of course, and his pleasant assurances probably served to soothe the consciences of those who may have been disturbed by his representations. But he talked nonsense, nevertheless, and nonsense which in his better moments he must see to be very pernicious. He has complained, subsequently, that his attempts at reform have not met with proper support, but he should accept a large share of the responsibility for this indifference. What else could he expect, when he had taken off the sharp edge of his own criticism by assuring those who were only too glad to believe so comforting a statement, that Dissenters were even in a worse condition? After inviting them to contemplate the advantages of a system, than which none is "better calculated to secure the great object of all patronage, purity and fitness of choice," and then contrasting it with a plan fraught with all kinds of mischief, it was hardly to be expected that they should be

very eager for the removal of the evils which even he himself had admitted and denounced.

The election of a pastor by the people must have its difficulties ; but they are not such as the Bishop and Churchmen generally—judging partly from the extraordinary examples of ministerial elections, by a miscellaneous body of parishioners, which they occasionally have in their own Church, partly from some exaggerated representations of what occurs among Dissenters—appear to fancy. Dr. Magee has been very diligent in his examination of the writings of John Angell James, and, by stringing together a number of phrases apart from their connection, has succeeded in producing a formidable indictment against the proceedings of Nonconformists in this matter. But for a great number of its worst counts it would be difficult to produce any evidence at all, unless indeed in a few exceptional cases, such as can hardly fail to arise in the most perfect system worked by imperfect men. “Secret canvassing,” “cabals, intrigues,” the “most disgusting exercise of the most disgusting tyranny,” “tyrannical deacons, ‘who are patrons of the living, bibles of the minister, and wolves of the flock,’” are not common among us. The Bishop says that any system of patronage, “place the patronage where you will—make it public, private, or popular—is subject to two disturbing influences, which you can never entirely get rid of. Two elements enter into it which have, as it were, a chemical affinity for each other, and which you can never keep entirely apart by the merely mechanical process of legislation. One of these is *money*, and the other is *human nature*.” Quite true ; but it must be assumed that in this spiritual chemistry something must depend on the proportions in which the two elements are combined, and it is possible that the limited extent to which money enters into such patronage as is exercised by Dissenting Churches saves them, for the most part, from the evils which Dr. Magee supposes to be incident to their system. The pastorate of a Nonconformist Church is something very different from the incumbency of a parish, which a clergyman may hold for life, with or without the approval of his congregation, and whether his ministry be a success or a failure. Few, indeed, are the cases in which the income is so large as to be a temptation to unworthy practices, such as canvassing, and, in all cases, it is so largely dependent upon the character and work of the man himself that he would reap little permanent benefit from the success obtained by such means. A more unkind act could hardly be done to a Congregational minister than to place him in a position to which, either from want of spiritual sympathy or lack of adaptation and power as a preacher, he is unequal. This will, of course, be regarded by many as one of the faults of the system. They hold that the position of a minister should be what they are pleased to describe as independent

of his people, but which is really a position in which he is independent of his own fitness for the office and of his faithfulness in the discharge of its duties. They apply to the ministry a principle which would be intolerable in any other department, and then coolly assume that the evils which follow are inherent in every mode of appointment to the office, and lay upon human nature and its relation to money abuses for which their particular system is responsible. The dependence of a minister upon God's blessing attending his own faithful efforts has, at all events, this advantage—that it serves to counteract the tendencies which they so greatly dread.

Still, human nature, with all its common passions and infirmities, works in Congregational Churches as elsewhere; but, as a rule, the evils which its weakness or folly produces are not of the kind which the Bishop assumes to be so much in the very nature of things that they must of necessity exist. By all the laws of "chemical affinity" they ought to be rampant, and it is therefore inferred that they are actually present. But, as a matter of fact, they are not. If the Bishop had access to the inner circles of Congregationalism, and thought it worth his while to make himself familiar with the manners and customs of such barbarous people, he would soon learn that the manner in which the evil of human nature developed itself among them, so far as the relations of pastors and Churches are concerned, is very different from that which he had anticipated. Complaints he would hear on both sides, just as, alas! he might hear murmurings even in the most favoured circles into which he might enter. As Ministers of State chafe under the restraints of Parliament, and Parliament rebels against the dictation of Ministers—as representatives are irritated by the exactions of constituencies, and electors have innumerable tales to tell of the negligence of their members—as bishops are fretted by the waywardness and insubordination of their clergy, and the clergy in their turn complain of the coldness and want of sympathy shown by their spiritual rulers—so in our Dissenting communions there is some of the kind of friction which is found elsewhere, producing sometimes a good deal of mutual repining, to which too serious a significance may very easily be attributed. We are not accustomed, indeed, even in the *abandon* of private conversation, to hear ministers accusing deacons, or deacons assailing ministers, in the style to which the Bishops must, from long practice, have become accustomed. But we do sometimes hear the one mourning over the deficient supply of effective preaching, and the other insisting upon the excessive demands of Churches whom it is impossible to satisfy, in a manner calculated to give an outsider a very exaggerated conception of the real condition of affairs. Of course, there are pessimists among us, as in all societies, who are perfectly confident that the former days were much better than

these, and that, unless there be some unlooked-for change, those to come will be far worse. But predictions of this kind are always discounted except when it suits critics, for party purposes, to regard the prophets as true seers.

It is not of them, however, that we speak, but rather of others, who, having had to face some annoyance and disappointment, or being impressed by facts which have come under their own observation, are apt to forget that all times and all systems have their own peculiar difficulties, and to fancy that their experience is one of exceptional trouble and vexation. Even from them the Bishop would hear, not of the flagrant breaches of Christian integrity, corruptions of spiritual purity, or invasions of Church freedom, which are the most striking features in his catalogue of abuses, but of other evils, which, though greatly to be regretted and condemned, are much less grave in their character. Churches do sometimes choose hastily, and then exhibit a "fickleness of disposition" towards the pastor they have chosen, which, however "dishonourable," is so common a fault that it is untrue to describe it as "peculiar." There is, no doubt, a danger of "distraction and division," and there are cases of "injudicious congregations inviting ignorant and incompetent pastors;" but these are very far from being so frequent as those who have no personal acquaintance with our Churches, and whose ideas of their working are really evolved out of their own internal consciousness, believe. As to "the public addresses of rival candidates, the house-to-house canvassing of electors, the trial sermon, and the competition prayer," they are purely fancy pictures, except so far as they are taken from the parochial elections which occasionally take place within the Establishment. Nonconformists know nothing of them, and happily they know as little of the nepotism with which even Episcopal patrons are sometimes charged.

In one point the Bishop is right. He speaks of the "Church left pastorless for months, while the congregation are making up their mind as to which of the many probationers they will accept." This is a serious evil, which undoubtedly exists, to whose seriousness the deacons or managers in some of our Churches seem to be hardly alive, and which, for various reasons, appears to be rather on the increase. It is no uncommon thing to hear that a Church which has been deprived of its pastor has resolved not even to seek after a successor for a period of three or even six months. Possibly there is a soreness of feeling occasioned by the loss of a minister who has been extremely useful and greatly beloved, and it is thought desirable that this should have time to subside before any attempt is made to fill up the vacancy. Possibly it is supposed that it would scarcely be seemly in a Church to think of at once transferring its affection and loyalty

from one who has lived in the heart of his people, and who has deserved to do so because of his eminent graces and good works, to a mere stranger. Possibly there has been a little disquietude and division of feeling, and it is too hastily assumed that it would not be easy to secure the approach to unanimity desirable in the settlement of a minister. Possibly there is an excess of caution on the part of the deacons. They are very desirous to obtain the best man available; they fancy there is no need for hurry; they are prepared with innumerable maxims of worldly prudence, which not only justify but actually enjoin delay; and they resolve on this policy in the full belief that they are consulting the best interests of the Church.

Their error is solely one of judgment. Still, an error we hold it to be, and one against which any large observation of facts should have been sufficient to guard them. Exceptional circumstances may make it wise for a Church to allow an interval to elapse between the removal of a pastor and the adoption of measures for obtaining a successor; but the cases are rare indeed where this is so. Even where existing difficulties appear to be great, they will very often disappear, or prove to be much less formidable than was imagined, if once they are boldly faced; and, should it be otherwise, it is generally better to meet them at once than trust to time, which is quite as likely to increase as to diminish them, for their removal. Indeed, if time were to have all the salutary influence expected from it, it is still open to question whether the Church is not likely to suffer more in other ways than it can gain from the soothing effects of procrastination. If men would only believe it, in Church government, as in other matters, it is best at once to grapple with difficulties which have to be dealt with at some time. The delay which boasts the parentage of prudence is often only the offspring of cowardice.

There is one feature, however, in connection with any mistaken action of this kind which it would be unfair to overlook. The sentimental element enters into the relations between Congregational pastors and Churches to an extent which is not at all appreciated by their critics in the Establishment. Where the union has been a happy one, a strength of attachment grows up which observers, unable to understand, are often disposed to turn into ridicule, but which surely is deserving rather of the highest respect. The removal of the minister may therefore, and in fact very often does, create a painful feeling that is not likely to arise in cases where promotion is expected, in the natural course of things, to bring about changes. In Dissenting congregations, indeed, there may be a vague expectation that the young minister, whose early development they are watching with such mingled pride and thankfulness, will some day be called to fill a position of higher responsibility and useful-

ness. But when the time, thus dimly anticipated, really comes, it is but seldom found that they are more reconciled to the change because they have foreseen it as inevitable. The wounded feeling thus produced is no doubt an obstacle to future action. But hard as it may sound, we are bound to say it is one that should not be allowed to operate. In public matters individual sentiment should always be held in strict subordination to the general good. The tender and loving remembrance of one whose ministry has been a fountain of real spiritual blessing is very proper, and there is no possible reason why it should not be kept fresh and green, but it becomes a curse if it stands in the way of Christ's work. The business of the Church has to go on though there be a change in its leader. The great conflict in which it has to take a part, and in which it needs all the help which the presence of a pastor ought to supply, never pauses for a moment. Fresh demands for thought and action are continually arising. There are new conditions of trouble or anxiety ever presenting themselves in connection with a congregation, which the occasional sermons of preachers unacquainted with the facts cannot be supposed to supply. It is folly to allow all these to remain uncared for, to suffer the Church to be deprived of the strength and inspiration which a leader is expected to give, and to rely on the intellectual excitement of constant changes in the pulpit as a substitute for the benefits to be derived from the influence and teaching of a beloved and trusted pastor. Better crush sentiment than run the risks involved in such a procedure as this, not the least of which is the fostering of that passionate craving for mere excitement which so often shows itself in Churches which have pursued this policy. We cannot see why true and loyal affection is incompatible with practical wisdom in this matter. There need be no harsh or unkindly breaking with the past, because a Church feels that its primary care must be for the living present. In short, all these purely personal considerations should give way when the work of the Master has to be done, and the one anxiety on every side should be to get it done in the most thorough and efficient manner. Where it is otherwise, there is no little reason to suspect that, unconsciously, the true spiritual nature of the office and its duties has been overlooked, and that there has been a disposition on the part of the workers to "burn incense to their own nets and sacrifice to their own drags."

If it be thought by any that for the delay of which we are speaking there is likely to be a compensation in the greater disposition to agreement subsequently, we must say that such a view is not justified by experience. Some of the happiest settlements we have seen—those in which the interruption to the work of the Church has been least felt, and in which new relations between minister and people have been most easily and harmoniously established—have been effected with little lapse of time

between the resignation of one pastor and the induction of another. The difficulty is to impress this view on the Churches; and we do not see in what way it is likely to be so effectually done as by the creation of a sounder public opinion among us on the subject. If it was felt to be a discredit to a Church for it to remain for many months, perhaps even for a year or two, without a pastor, we fancy there would not be the delay in settlements which we now so often see. At present it is, we fear, thought proper that the interval between the close of one pastorate and the commencement of another should be of some length, and there may be even an expression of surprise if it is not so. Acting under this impression, the deacons of a vacant Church too often make preaching arrangements for a considerable time in advance, instead of at once addressing themselves to the work of bringing under the notice of the Church someone who seems to be possessed of the necessary qualifications for its pastorate. The consequence is that its attention is distracted from the very business to which all the members ought first to look. Preacher follows preacher from Sunday to Sunday, each one probably exciting some interest and ministering to the edification of some of the people, and the Church gradually drifts into a state of unrest and disquiet, which may ultimately lead to even worse results, that might easily have been avoided by the exercise of a little foresight.

The one thought which those who manage the affairs of a Church at such a crisis should discard is, that which seems to be the most natural in the view of the Bishop—that of competition. The members will have ultimately to decide in relation to any candidate, but they should have to pronounce solely on the individual himself, and not on him in comparison with some real or supposed rival. So thoroughly is this accepted as a wise maxim in our ecclesiastical economy, that no Church which is wisely guided would so far depart from it as to pit one minister against other, and still less is it probable that any minister of high reputation would consent to be placed in so invidious a position. But there is a kind of modified competition, which is not so unfrequent. The deacons or ministerial committee invite a number of preachers, of whom they have got satisfactory reports, to occupy the pulpit on successive Sundays, intending, when they have exhausted their list, to ask the opinion of the Church as to the one who may appear most acceptable to the people generally. It is a plan on which we cannot look with approval. It unnecessarily consumes a good deal of valuable time, it exposes a number of good men to an annoying disappointment which they ought to have been spared, and it lays the foundation for possible, not to say probable, divisions and troubles. Our own advice to a Church without a pastor would be very simple. "Commit the duty of seeking a

“ successor to the wisest and best of your members associated with the
“ deacons for this special purpose, and let them accept the charge on
“ the distinct understanding that your desire is to avoid all unnecessary
“ delay. Let this committee, on its part, at once institute the needful
“ inquiries, having recourse to the ministers or members of other
“ Churches in whose judgment it reposes the most confidence. As
“ soon as it hears of a minister who is judged to be eligible, and on
“ whose behalf it has trustworthy testimony, and has satisfied itself, not
“ only of his general ability and approved character, but of his adap-
“ tation to the particular Church for which it is acting, let him be
“ invited to preach, and let the Church have an opportunity of forming
“ its own opinion.” We venture to predict that, if the previous steps
have been wisely taken, and if the members of the committee actually
understand and represent the mind of the Church, the issue will
generally be satisfactory, and popular election thus conducted will prove
to be the most happy mode of appointment to the ministerial office.

The objection may be started that this really does not give the people
any opportunities of choice, and in a sense this is true. But the self-
repression which would sacrifice any fancied right of this kind, is a
virtue which it ought not to be difficult to exercise. The members as a
whole have, by their own free act, delegated to a committee the task of
looking out a godly and able minister of the New Testament, and the task
has been executed to their satisfaction. Wherein is there a just ground of
complaint because they have not also had placed before them a number
of others on whose comparative merits they might have pronounced? Such a
demand on their part may look specious and plausible, but it is as
impolitic as it is without any foundation of principle. Take the most
unfavourable view of the other course, and suppose that a Church by
alone accepting a fully-accredited and efficient man, without waiting to
look out for one possessed of more popular gifts, were really to lose a
minister of greater power, who might have been found if more carefully
sought out. To assume that this would have been so, is itself to make
a very large demand on our faith, but even if it be granted, the question
still remains, whether the evils accruing from prolonged uncertainty, and
consequent agitation, would not more than counterbalance any advantage
to be derived from the superior abilities, or, at least, more popular
adaptation, of the minister ultimately secured.

It is here that we approach the core of the evil most felt among us at
present. Churches remain without pastors, and ministers, though qualified
for useful work are left for months to sigh over enforced idleness,
while their hearts are panting for the joy of active service, largely
because of the over-strained expectations which are abroad as to the
standard of excellence and power to be looked for in a preacher. The

remarkable but very exceptional success of a few men has in many quarters awakened a feeling of discontent with those who are not able to point to similar results, and do not show any capacity for attaining them, but who nevertheless are likely to prove faithful teachers and diligent workers for Christ. When a Church is possessed with this idea, it enters on its search for a pastor with a resolution to find some man who will produce a sensation. Probably its leaders would not be able to define to themselves precisely what they want or expect. They are not so destitute of common sense as to suppose that Spurgeons are manufactured at will, nor in truth are they so delighted with the issue of the attempts to reproduce the great preacher as to desire a pastor of the type thus formed. Yet, though they know that it were vain to hope for another Spurgeon, and though they would turn away from a man who could copy, however successfully, his manner or his peculiarities without a trace of his genius or power, they allow themselves, perhaps to some extent unconsciously, to be so affected by what they hear and see of the wonderful results at the Metropolitan Tabernacle and a few other places, as to turn away with indifference from men of undoubted goodness and power, who do not produce immediate and startling effects.

The marvellous success of Mr. Moody's mission has still further encouraged this feeling. "Here," many say, "is a man of little or no culture, but dominated by the spirit of his work, and preaching in the simplest form, but with a singular earnestness, the glorious Gospel; and these are the fruits. Why should not our preachers and students follow his example and achieve similar triumphs? We want for a pastor a man of his stamp, and will seek till we find him." Now, if this means only that the object is to secure a pastor of a like loyalty to Christ and His truth, a similar devotion to the saving of souls, an equal measure of earnestness, of singleness of purpose, and of concentration of energy on the one end, we heartily commend the attempt to secure it. Our young preachers should take account of this feeling. It may sometimes be developed in an unwise manner, and may express itself hastily and unpleasantly, but it is sound at bottom. When properly interpreted, it means that the Church wants not only cultured scholars, but true-hearted, loving, and powerful preachers, ready to become all things to all men that they may save some. It is owing to accidental circumstances that this demand is translated into a cry for men like Mr. Moody. In asking this it asks it knows not what, and would be bitterly disappointed if its own request was granted. We have ourselves seen men who, without any particular adaptation for the work of preaching, have expected to emulate the success of the great evangelist by retailing, in the most common-place language, a few of the most familiar

truths. This is what they are pleased to consider as the preaching of the simple Gospel, and they not only hope to secure great results by it, but they are disposed to look on any minister of a different order with a hardly-concealed suspicion of his genuineness and spirituality. But the anticipated harvest is not reaped, and if the men themselves will not learn it, the onlookers soon discover that, whatever be the secret of Mr. Moody's power, they have not learned it. Mr. Moody, like Mr. Spurgeon, like Henry Ward Beecher, like others who are held up as ideal preachers, is a man *sui generis*. For Churches to wait till, by some special interposition of Divine Providence in their favour, pastors of equal gifts are raised up for them, is an act of suicidal folly. Their wishes are not at all likely to be gratified, and in the meantime the attempts to realise them are needlessly exposing the Church to serious perils, from which it may not be easy afterwards to extricate it.

Young ministers or students for the ministry are entitled to more consideration than is generally accorded to them. They have to address themselves to congregations who are more or less affected by the theological discussions which are so rife among us, and which are not confined to learned treatises, or even to magazines and reviews exclusively devoted to such grave questions, but find their way even into newspapers, whose light, flippant, and cynical mode of dealing with them is most painful. The consequence is, that there is not among the hearers themselves the same amount of sympathy which once existed. Congregations are divided into different classes, with diversified wants and expectations. While some insist on the simplest presentation of the common truth, others demand that the various phases of new thought and opinion should be dealt with in such a manner as to satisfy the wants of cultivated minds. The preacher who has to satisfy these diverse and somewhat conflicting, not to say irreconcilable, requirements, is possibly himself feeling the influence of the cross currents of thought to which he is exposed, and has his own difficulties. The least which he can ask from all generous Christians is a kindly judgment of his attempts to do the Master's work, and speak the truth that is in him. And if the Churches find in him spiritual earnestness, combined with true intellectual power and adaptation to popular need, they may surely trust that He who has given him these qualifications for the work of the ministry, will also prosper the word that he speaks.

There is, as we think unfortunately, less disposition than there once was on the part of the Churches to seek out young men of promise who may grow up with them, gathering by degrees that power and influence which can seldom be found except after a ministry of many years' dura-

tion. James of Birmingham, Jay of Bath, Parsons of York, began and ended their pastorate in the same Church, alike to their own honour and to the advantage of the Church. We do not say that this should be the invariable or even the general rule. It is a considerable advantage to many young men to spend a few years in a sphere comparatively limited, and thus to mature in quiet the powers which may qualify them for a position of larger influence. But, on the other hand, it is not to be assumed that there are not among those who are only entering the ministry some who might with great success undertake the pastorate of Churches of considerable size and influence, and probably make them their sphere for life. Settlements of this kind, wisely formed, often prove to be most happy and prosperous, and the possibility of effecting them ought not to be ignored by Churches which are unfortunately without a pastor. Undoubtedly it requires some insight to discover the promise of such a career in a mere beginner, but that is only to say that the guidance of a Church, like all other important work, needs special qualification if it is to be done well. Those who do it will not rest on their unaided strength, but they will feel also that, while they ask Divine help, they must bring to it the best of their own powers.



THE POWER OF PRAYER.

A HOMILY FOR THE TIMES.

"Peter therefore was kept in prison; *but prayer* was made without ceasing of *the Church* unto God for him; . . . *many* were gathered together praying."—ACTS xii. 5, 12.

THERE is presented to us in these words a contrast, a very striking and instructive contrast. On the one side there is earthly power, in its highest form, and backed by all the might of hell; on the other side there is the power of prayer, nothing but the power of prayer. And there is conflict; there is trial of strength. And never did evil occupy a more advantageous position; never was there a more complete union and concentration of its available forces. But what was the issue of the conflict? Which of the two antagonistic powers gained the victory?

The consideration of this conflict, and of its issue, should nerve our faith and stimulate our prayer. The contending powers have seldom been matched as they were on that ancient battle-ground. To the giant confederacy the Church opposed nothing but prayer; she had nothing else to oppose. She was driven in entirely upon God. In the great juncture that had come, the only thing she could do was to pray.

The immediate occasion of the conflict was Peter. Upon him it centred; on his account it was waged. His boldness and zeal, and

holiness, and the spiritual triumphs achieved by his hand excited the hatred and aroused the opposition of the enemies of truth and of God. And the earthly leader of these enemies, Herod the king, issued a mandate for his apprehension and imprisonment. A base time-server was Herod the king, an abject slave, though clad in royal purple. The holy Apostle James he murdered; "and because he saw it *pleased* the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also." The supreme motive of Herod was love of popularity—an ignoble, wretched motive. Strange, fearful retributions come upon those whose life is governed by that law!

The mandate of Herod was speedily executed. Peter was apprehended and cast into prison. His crime was not law-breaking, but law-keeping. The law-breaker was on the throne. Nor was it the first or the last time that the law-breaker has been on the throne, and the law-keeper in the dungeon.

And never was prisoner more secure, or more carefully guarded. The prison walls were strong and high; the prison gates were of massive iron; and far within the fortified gloom Peter lay in chains, the special charge of "four quaternions of soldiers." From the mere human point of view, from the point of view of sense and reason, escape was utterly impossible; to entertain the thought of it was like indulging a madman's dream. Contemplate the situation. Survey the prison walls, and gates, and bars. Penetrate to Peter's dungeon. Look at his fetters. Note the armed men who are charged to keep him at the peril of their own lives; consider all the environments of Peter, the spiritual as well as the material, the invisible as well as the visible, and say if the prey is not absolutely secure; say if the captive is not helplessly and hopelessly given over unto death!

In the minds of the enemies of Peter there was not the shadow of a doubt as to his safe-keeping, or as to the certainty of his doom. And everything was arranged and fixed. Peter was to follow James and Christ; the plan was laid, and in Herod's thought the execution of it was as if it had already taken place. Herod "*intended* after Easter to bring Peter forth unto the people." The martyrdom of the leader and champion of the new and rapidly advancing cause was to be a sort of public spectacle or show for the gratification and triumph of the Jews.

And the cruel, despicable tyrant was troubled by no fears as to consequences. There was no earthly power to call him to account. There was no earthly tribunal before which he could be arraigned for his crime. He could perpetrate the diabolical deed with perfect impunity. He could deliver into the hands of murderers the holy Apostle of the Lord, and no one say to him, "What doest thou?" The world was on the tyrant's side.

The moment for the evolution of the dark and hellish plot is drawing

very near. The Easter season, which the gilded hypocrite and royal villain could not desecrate, is almost over; only a few hours of it remain. In the murderous purpose of Herod it is Peter's last night on earth. The morrow will see him dragged forth to a mock trial, and condemned by a foregone condemnation. The morrow will see him scourged and reviled, and treading the path of shame, of suffering, and of death his Master trod. Jerusalem is in high expectation of the tragedy.

How does Peter contemplate the prospect? He knows what his enemies have determined upon. He knows what they have resolved to do on the morrow. How does he contemplate the prospect? Enter his prison cell, and you will see. In a few hours he is to be set up for barbarous sport to his enemies. In a few hours he is to be subjected to insult, and ignominy, and torture, and the cruelest death. And what is he doing? How is he spending the brief interval before the dark and tragic scenes of his martyrdom? He sleeps! Ah! He sleeps! And did you ever see such sleep? Let the dim light of the prison lamp fall softly on the sleeper, and look at him. Bend over him, and look at him. The face is rugged; but did you ever see such an expression of deep and holy calm? did you ever see such a commentary on the glorious words, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee"? Oh, for the painter's genius and the painter's art to catch and represent the meanings of that face as I apprehend them now! The radiance of the inner light illumines all the veil! The soul that transfigures and glorifies these rough and weather-beaten features is voyaging on stormless seas of bliss, and is entranced with visions of the everlasting rest!

"When Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was *sleeping* between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the keepers before the door kept the prison." And was there anything more appropriate to Peter than sleep? Nothing. It perfectly accorded with his circumstances; it was the thing beyond all others that accorded with his circumstances. In the whole world there was no one so entitled to sleep. Though the occupant of a felon's cell and bound with chains, he had "a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men." Fidelity to truth and to the Master he served was the cause of his imprisonment. Then, leave that cell where "the calm-souled martyr" sleeps. Depart from the gloomy precincts, and pass along the midnight streets to the well-known home of Mary, the mother of Mark and the sister of Barnabas, and there you will find another reason for Peter's sleep, another justification of Peter's sleep. There, indeed, you will discover the key of the entire position, in this great, and anxious, and critical juncture. Not in the throne of Herod, nor in the mightier

throne of Satan, but in the humble dwelling-place of Mary does that key lie. Enter the humble dwelling-place. There is admittance for the friends of Jesus. Many are assembled there in secret. The house is full. It has been full for days. It is fuller now than during any part of the preceding sorrowful time. It is the last night of Peter's imprisonment; and in the plan and confident thought of Peter's enemies the morrow will be a day of disaster and woe for him and for the Church. What are these men and women doing that throng the house of Mary? They are praying; that is all. They are laying their great trouble before God, rolling their burden upon Him, pleading with Him to interpose. And they have resolved to spend the whole night in prayer; the dawn shall see them prostrate at the throne; the last moment of Peter's imprisonment shall be filled with their intercessions. And tears mingle with their prayers; and their prayers rise into strong wrestlings. And the burden of their cry is, "Lord, deliver Peter, and bring the devices of the enemy to nought!"

They know not *how* the deliverance is to be wrought. They cannot penetrate the darkness; they cannot solve the difficulty. They only know that deliverance *is* possible—possible, in spite of prison walls, and bolted gates, and armed watchers, and iron fetters, and all the art and might of earth and hell. They call to mind the wonders of the ancient times, and they brace their faith with the inspiring words of their risen and all-powerful Lord, "Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

And what is the effect of their prayer? Is it simply a reflex effect? Is there nothing more than the spiritual benefit involved in the exercise of prayer? There is a great deal more. There is an effect in the sphere of the visible and the material—a glorious effect! These praying ones have not found that the Creator is helplessly dominated and fettered by the works of His own hands, but that He fulfils the meanings of the sublime declaration, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Peter is given back to the Church's prayer. While they pray the answer comes. While they pray Peter stands at the door and knocks. A strong angel from the realm that rules the visible has struck off his chains, has cast a spell on the armed watchers, has driven back the iron bars, has led Peter forth to liberty; and he stands at the door and knocks, the evidence to that praying company, the evidence to every praying company, that, of all the powers in God's universe, the greatest is the power of prayer.

"Peter therefore was kept in prison: *but prayer* was made without ceasing of *the Church* unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two

soldiers, bound with two chains : and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison ; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him ; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel ; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city ; which opened to them of his own accord : and they went out, and passed on through one street ; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent His angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark ; *where many were gathered together praying.*"

The narrative has its lessons for our time. *We* have yet to test the power of prayer. We know nothing of that power as we ought to know it, and as we must know it, if the Church is to rise to the level of her present splendid opportunity, and fulfil her mission in this age.

There are those who tell us that prayer cannot be answered, that the only advantage arising from prayer is in the exercise itself. Their negations they base on mere conjectural or hypothetical explanations of the relations of the Deity to the universe, or upon the assertion that the Deity and the universe are identical. But to the negations of the scientific sceptic we oppose the character, and words, and example of Jesus Christ, and the attested and authenticated facts of Scripture history and of Christian experience. Upon these certitudes, as upon rock, we stand, amid the assaults and questionings of unbelief, and, raising our eyes to heaven, we utter the invocation, "O Thou that hearest prayer !" proclaiming thereby our faith alike in the efficacy of prayer and in the personality of God.

Prayer is an instinct of the human heart, indestructible, irrepressible, never failing to assert itself in the supreme moments of life ; and it links our need with the Divine fulness, our weakness with the Divine might. Through prayer we live in God, and are filled with Him, and become the organs of His highest manifestation.

The kind of prayer required to-day is just the prayer, in its chief characteristics, that ascended from the home of Mary during Peter's imprisonment — believing, earnest, persevering, united prayer. I emphasise the word *united*. Those praying ones were "agreed." A

common burden pressed upon their hearts, and pressed heavily; a common petition rose to the throne, and was urged with a persistency that was itself prophetic of the answer. The repetition of that ancient scene is the greatest want of these times. "*Many gathered together praying*"—"the Church" praying, and her prayer the result of her vividly apprehending the gravity and grandeur of the present situation and of the conviction that her only help is in the Lord.

That ancient scene repeated,—"*many gathered together, praying*;" "*the Church*" praying, casting herself simply and entirely upon the Lord, realising her need and her responsibility, and pleading with a resolute faith the promises, inspired with a common purpose and feeling and longing and hope, *testing* the power of prayer—releases would follow more wonderful than Peter's; releases of sin-bound souls; releases, in numbers greater than before, of the crushed and broken and bleeding captives of the devil; and these released ones would pass into the "glorious liberty of the children of God." Ay, and the Church herself would experience release, the Church herself would emerge from bondage, from the bondage of the world and sin; from the bondage of her own narrowness, and coldness, and selfishness; from the bondage of traditionalism, and formalism, and sectarianism, and priestism. Life would burst all her bands, and break her chains, and impel her forward in the path of her destiny, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

Numerous are the remedies proposed for the evils which afflict the Church. Much time is spent in conferences and discussions. We concern ourselves a great deal about the external. Questions relating to money, and organisation, and doctrine, and politico-ecclesiastical legislation, and "our principles" absorb, for the most part, our thought and energy when we come together. I do not say that these matters should not occupy us; far from it. I believe they ought to occupy us; and I glory in the cultured and manly intelligence of English Congregationalism, and in the stamp and character it is giving to our position in the nation, and in the helpful and energetic relations it sustains to the genuine progress of our times. At the same time I affirm—and I affirm it very solemnly and earnestly—that the solution of the problems that are forcing themselves upon us with so much urgency does not lie in the line of any external methods, no matter how excellent and wise. We must change our front, and begin with God. The initial stage of the new and better epoch after which we are striving must be a season of heart-searching and prayer. "Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly." Let the Congregational Churches of England humble themselves before the Lord, and refer all their matters to Him. Let the ancient words have fulfilment in the practice of these critical and eventful times, "Prayer

was made without ceasing of *the Church* unto God;" "*Many* were gathered together praying." Let there be concert for prayer, and the difficulties that beset us will vanish, the problems that perplex us will be solved, the prison doors we have failed to force a Divine Power will open; a mighty life will be infused into our Churches and will develop into manifold salvations; and, instead of our being "stamped out" either in town, or village, or hamlet, we shall "multiply exceedingly," and, by our zeal, and self-sacrifice, and living power, and holy triumphs—by the Christliness of our sympathy and works—shall vindicate alike the Divine authority of the principles that distinguish us and the efficacy of the Gospel we preach.

The verdure and glory of spring are transfiguring the earth's dulness and barrenness. And as the days move on "the pastures will be clothed with flocks, the valleys also will be covered over with corn." Whence the renewal? Whence the beautiful Palingenesia? It has its source in life, in the "River of God which is full of water." It is the development, the efflorescence of life. The plenty that in the autumn-time will fill the lap of the year will be "transmuted" life. The only thing of real value in the spiritual sphere is "transmuted" life. Let the Church repair anew to the "River of God, which is full of water," and dwell, by constant faith and prayer, upon its banks, absorbing the exhaustless stream, and nothing shall be wanting to her. She will become, in a sense unknown in these generations, "a tree of life, bearing *twelve* manner of fruits, and yielding her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree shall be for the healing of the nations."

Oh, that I knew how to speak to express what I feel as to the need and as to the special duty of this hour! I reiterate, with all earnestness, the affirmation, Our supreme want is life. That want met, there would be no other. Life would work itself out, by necessary laws, into all requisite improvements, and adaptations, and reformations. And the condition of life is prayer—believing, earnest, persevering, united prayer. "When they had *prayed*, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and *they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

Derby.

W. CROSBIE.

THE MISSION TO THE WORKING MEN OF PARIS.

(L'ŒUVRE MCALL.)

WHEN on my way to attend the Synod of the Italian Free Church in the autumn of 1872, I remember stopping for a few hours in Paris, and going to a small meeting for working men on one of the exterior Boulevards, as they used to be called. It was held in a shop, not far from the famous cemetery of Père La Chaise. About fifty or sixty persons were present, all of them of the lower orders. The service, if so it might be called, was of a peculiar order, the greater part consisting of bright and cheerful singing, interspersed with reading and addresses. It was pleasant to observe the curious interest with which the people seemed to watch the proceedings, but I must confess to having cherished a secret doubt as to whether the originator of this and similar meetings, the Rev. R. W. McAll, was likely in this way to lay hold of the thoughtless and often sceptical *ouvriers* of the French metropolis. Before the war, the intensest and most malignant hatred had often been shown to the name of God and to all who professed to believe in Him, by multitudes of these very people who were now being invited to attend these *Réunions Morales*, under the plea that "*quelques amis Anglais désirent vous parler de Jésus Christ*" (some English friends wish to speak to you about Jesus Christ). It did not seem a promising field in which to work, while the plan adopted was new and strange, and utterly opposed to French Protestant traditional methods of operation. It was, in fact, so bold and original a course, that the question at once presented itself to the mind, Will the authorities, often more or less directly influenced as they often are by the Romish priesthood, suffer it to continue? So I, and many others also, "doubted whereunto this would grow."

But now, after spending a fortnight in the midst of the work, I desire to record my hearty conviction that our friends were moved by a truly Divine impulse when they resolved to initiate this great movement. The mission has grown into one of very considerable proportions, and has been largely blessed of God. I feel, therefore, that the time has come when our Congregational Churches, and all who are interested in the extension of Christ's kingdom, should know the history of the work, and should lend it that aid and sympathy which it so richly deserves. I question whether there is any mission of modern times, carried on in civilised lands, that can surpass this in the romance attaching to it, or in the results that have been attained.

In the autumn of 1871, the Rev. R. W. McAll, the only son of the eloquent Dr. McAll, of Manchester, was returning with his wife from a ramble in Switzerland, and, like many other English people, stopped for

a few days in Paris to see the ravages which foreign and civil war had made in the beautiful city. Having strolled up in the direction of Belleville, one of the most densely-populated *faubourgs*, they were struck with the pleasant and ready way in which the people accepted the tracts which they offered them, and especially with the words of one of a crowd of working men who had gathered around them. "Sir," said this intelligent and honest-looking man, who knew a little English, "I have something to tell you. Throughout this whole district, containing tens of thousands of *ouvriers*, we have to a man done with the priests: we cannot accept an imposed religion. But if anyone would come to teach us religion of another kind, a religion of freedom and reality, many of us are ready for it." This little speech engraved itself on the heart of our brother, and on his return home to his Church at Hadleigh, in Suffolk, he began to talk to some of his people about starting a mission in Paris. Many difficulties were at once suggested. The Church was happy with its minister, and it was a pity to think of dissolving so useful a bond. Again, the discomforts of living in a foreign city, the difficulty of acquiring a new language, the possible danger attending an attempt to preach the gospel among *Communards*,—these and other reasons were urged for not following the generous impulse of the heart. At length, as both Mr. and Mrs. McAll still felt drawn towards Paris, they determined to lay the whole matter before Dr. Fisch, who, as Secretary of the French Evangelical Society, and a pastor long resident in Paris, was thought to be able and willing to give wise counsel. His reply was awaited with anxiety, and when received was opened with a trembling hand, and with much prayer to be able to accept its decision. It said, "Come and try;" and so, home and friends and Church were left, and the noble adventurers started for Paris. Two months were spent in studying the language, and in translating some of our well-known hymns, and in setting them to English tunes. Then, a shop having been hired in the Rue Julien Lacroix in Belleville, the first meeting was held in January, 1872. It was a doubtful experiment: the police were at hand to prevent disturbance, but their services were not required. At first very few of the passers-by could be induced to enter, but after an hour's service it was found that forty persons had been present during the whole or a part of the time. On the second occasion 100 people gathered together, and so this meeting continued, until at last larger premises were required. Eventually, a beer-drinking saloon in Belleville High-street, as we may call it, and with a back entrance in the Rue de Puebla, was secured and set apart for the purposes of the Mission, and here, every Sunday and Tuesday evenings, 300 people may be seen heartily joining in the singing, and listening with rapt attention to the readings and addresses.

Encouraged by the success of the first few meetings, Mr. McAll proceeded to open a room on the Boulevard Ménilmontant, then a third at Charonne, and so from month to month and year to year one place after another was built, until now there are no less than twenty *salles* simply and neatly fitted up for these *Réunions Morales*, or *Conférences Populaires*, as they are variously styled. Several of the rooms have undergone enlargements. Thus, for instance, on the Boulevard Ornano, where the fourth meeting was started, the first room soon became too small. This was the more remarkable, because at its opening great opposition was made by the atheists, and no effort was spared to prevent a congregation from being gathered. But in vain; such numbers came that it was necessary to find a much larger place, and this in its turn has lately proved too small, and such additions have been made that it will contain 500 people. On Monday, March 26th, the enlarged hall was re-opened, and a *café* offered to all who had been accustomed to attend these Ornano meetings. The occasion was one of deep interest. Every available chair was occupied. It was pleasant to observe the polite and grateful attitude of the whole assembly, while the coffee and buns were being served out. There was no unseemly clamouring, indeed it was almost difficult in some cases to induce the poor people to accept what was offered. But most striking of all was the hearty way in which some favourite hymns were sung, and the look of love and gratitude with which Mr. McAll was welcomed by them all, after a brief period of much-needed rest.

One of the last places opened is at 37, Rue de Rivoli, within a few yards of the Hotel de Ville. This was a bold venture, for, as visitors to Paris well know, the Rue de Rivoli is in the centre of the city, and has often been compared to our Regent-street in London. It was doubtful whether any of the *bourgeois* would be willing to come to the *Conférences*. Encouraged, however, by the offer of £50 towards the rent,* and by the wonderful success of the movement elsewhere, it was resolved to try. And now for four months meetings have been held every day—on Sundays at 3 p.m., and on other days at 8 p.m., and with an average attendance, including all who come, whether for a shorter or a longer period, of 150 persons. Such a result is most cheering, and seems to indicate that wherever the Word of Life is offered in Paris in this simple and uneclesiastical fashion, there are many who will at once come to hear and receive it.

I have said that there are now twenty *salles*, and it may be interesting to observe that, with the exception of this central one in the Rue de

* This was, after all, but a small sum with which to start such a meeting, for the yearly rental of the room is £200, to which must be added another £100 for taxes, gas, attendance, &c.

Rivoli, almost all the rest are situated on or near the external Boulevards, so forming, as M. Rosseuw St. Hilaire, one of the Sorbonne Professors, and a most earnest and efficient helper of Mr. McAll, has humorously said *Le Blocus de Paris* (the Blockade of Paris), or a chain of forts, by means of which it is sought to do battle with the manifold forces of the Prince of the power of the air.

Having thus briefly traced the origin and progress of the Mission, it may be well to try and portray the general features of the *salles*, and of the *Conférences* as conducted by their indefatigable originator, and we can hardly do better than select the central meeting-place. As we approach the spot, we observe a long window, curtained below, and bearing an inscription in large letters, *Conférences Populaires à 8 h. du soir*, or, if it is dark, we are struck with a projecting gas illumination forming the word *Conférences*. A kindly middle-aged man offers us a paper respecting the meeting, and stating that some English and French friends wish to speak about the love of Jesus Christ. On entering we find ourselves in a long narrow shop, but widening out at the far end, where there is a platform and desk. A Bible-woman hands us a hymn-book, and asks us to take a seat. The hour for beginning has not arrived, but a few persons are assembled, and some are reading illustrated periodicals corresponding to our *British Workman*. Presently, Mr. and Mrs. McAll enter, and the latter takes her place at the harmonium (each of the *salles* is furnished with one of these instruments), and begins to play with much taste and feeling. The lent books are collected together, and Mr. McAll announces a hymn. Gradually the chairs begin to fill. Some of their occupants having attended previous meetings join in the singing, while others look with much curiosity at the hymns and at the singers. There is a rapidity and cheerfulness about the singing that must be perfectly startling to those who have been accustomed to that common in French Protestant Churches, but which to these promiscuous audiences soon proves very attractive. The first hymn over, a second is perhaps announced—one of Sankey's, "Jesus of Nazareth," or "Hold the Fort," in a French version. Then a few verses of Scripture are read, generally a narrative, and this perhaps is one of the most important parts of the meeting. By this means many obtain their first acquaintance with Scripture. After another hymn follows an address by the president, or some friend who has come to help, a pastor or evangelist, or it may be a layman. So the meeting proceeds. Two or three addresses are given, interspersed with singing, and occasionally with a solo. No controversy is allowed and no political allusions. The Gospel is presented in its various aspects, and many a solemn appeal is made to the conscience. Before closing, a few words of prayer are offered, and these are also found in many cases to exercise a potent

influence. Many have expressed their surprise and delight in hearing these simple supplications, in which the wants of their families and their country are not forgotten. "Thank you for the prayer," said one; "I never heard anything of the kind before. You did not leave any of us out." As the people separate, tracts or portions of Scripture are given away, and Bibles or other books are gratuitously lent to such as ask for them, and this is no unimportant part of the business. Mr. McAll takes his stand at the door, and with his kind and winning look and polite and affable manner, tries to become in some measure acquainted with his hearers.

It must not be thought that the holding of these meetings constitutes the whole work which our friends and their fellow-labourers are carrying on. Bible-classes were begun at one or two of the stations in 1874, and are gradually being introduced wherever the attendance at the meetings has become at all regular. Then there are meetings for the practice of singing, and at a few places also for prayer. Instruction in English is also offered, and highly appreciated at some stations. Nor are the young forgotten. Indeed, a separate mission may said to have been formed for their special benefit, under the direction of Mr. Maitland Heriot, who most kindly and nobly devotes his time and strength to this department. The Sunday-schools thus formed, and the children's meetings thus held, have already yielded much encouragement, as may be gathered from the fact that in 1876 they were attended every week by an average of 1,440 children.

Again, efforts are made to obtain a personal knowledge of the people. Bible-women and others try to visit them in their homes, and to help and comfort them in their seasons of sickness and trouble, but, it must be added, very little is done in the way of gifts * in money or kind, so that no one can possibly charge this Mission with seeking to purchase converts. And it is this almost entire absence of the eleemosynary element which helps one to realise the true character of the Mission, and to see that the thousands who come together week after week are impelled by a sincere desire to receive religious instruction, and in many cases to obtain the "Pearl of great price." In this country it would not be difficult to point to gatherings of poor people in whom the hope of temporal relief predominates far above the expectation or wish for spiritual blessings; but looking into the faces of these Paris *ouvriers*, one has the pleasant feeling that, whatever may be the varied reasons that bring them together, the anticipation of loaves and fishes is not one of them.

The lower orders in Paris are a good-natured set of people, and since the siege and the suppression of the Commune they have exhibited a

* The balance-sheet for 1876 shows that 944*l.* 10*s.* (£37 15*s.* 4*d.*) was given to the sick and destitute.

far more orderly and quiet spirit than used to characterise them in the days of the Empire. They are easily affected by kindness, and I shall not soon forget the gratitude expressed by several, whom I happened to visit in company with an evangelist, more than a year after the Franco-German war. Their hearts seemed even then to overflow with thankfulness to the English people for the generous way in which they came to their help when the siege was raised and famine was staring them in the face. And it was when their hearts were still tender from the experience of suffering and of the kindness which sought to alleviate it that Mr. McAll appeared amongst them, and, in broken language at first, but with the accents of a truly loving heart, asked them to come to his meetings. To some the appeal was irresistible. "*Ces bons Anglais*" (these kind English people) was a frequent expression, while the thought of very many doubtless was, We must at least hear what they have to say. It was seen to be a self-sacrificing effort, and as such it won respect and confidence. Said an *ouvrier* once to Mr. McAll, "You must often be very tired at night; but I should think that your sleep is very sweet, when you reflect that you have spent the day in trying to do good to us French people."

But, if the loving and brotherly character of the work is one of the secrets of its success, it is not the only one. Apart from the spirit of faith and prayer in which it has always been conducted, we must note the admirable tact and marvellous organising power possessed by the director. The simple, original, and—if I may be allowed to say so—the unorthodox character of the services is of his devising. The landlady who was asked to let a room for the purposes of the Mission, and who said, "I quite understand your object: they say you are the people who are not of any religion," may be thought by many to have been quite mistaken; but what she meant was, that there was nothing of a sectarian or party spirit in the movement. It was in her eyes quite unecclesiastical, and therefore not connected with any form of religion that she knew of. It is this which renders the police authorities so uniformly favourable to the work. There is no attempt to establish a Church, or even to set up a form of worship. This, too, makes it so welcome to many of the *ouvriers*, who have conceived a hatred for priests and priestism. Mr. McAll stated in the paper which he read at the Congregational Union meetings in Nottingham in 1872, that his desire was to act as a pioneer—opening up, if possible, a path for the entrance of the Gospel among a people ignorant of its nature, but prejudiced against all who had professed to preach it to them. And this is the rôle that he has persistently adhered to. Again, his power of organisation enables him to arrange for about fifty meetings every week, and to assign to his various co-workers—door-keepers,

organists, and speakers—their several places and duties, and thus to secure the orderly and regular working of the whole Mission. Nor must I omit to mention the marvellous energy* and self-denying zeal displayed by both Mr. and Mrs. McAll. Day after day and, I may add, night after night, they toil on unremittingly during ten months out of the twelve. The demands of the work have marvellously increased; but still they remain at their posts, ungrudgingly spending strength as well as means in this truly missionary cause. And most ably are they helped by their various colleagues, paid and unpaid. I know of no other band of workers so hard-worked as these.

"What now," some reader is beginning to ask, "are the results of all this labour?" My reply is, They are manifold. It is no insignificant result to be able to state, as the last report does, that during 1876 there were nearly four hundred thousand attendances at these meetings. Many of these were present, perhaps, at every meeting held in their neighbourhood, while some have been regular members from the commencement. It is, indeed, cause for devout thankfulness to the great Head of the Church, that in the course of one year so many thousand Parisians should have been gathered together to hear the elementary truths of the Gospel. But other results than mere attendance have been observed. The words of a Christian *ouvrier* are worthy of note in this connection: "After two years, during which I have frequented the meetings on the Boulevard Ornano, I can testify that a large number, who at first merely came to pass away an hour—many of them secretly mocking at religion, or disliking it—have become convinced of its truth;" while in most of the Reformed and Free Churches are to be found persons who were brought to a knowledge of the truth at those meetings. And, if such results can be positively stated, we may be perfectly sure that there are many others known to God, and which "the day will declare." The word of the Lord cannot return unto Him void.

I may add, that nearly all the Evangelical ministers of Paris—Reformed, Lutheran, and Free—heartily rejoice in the Mission, and many of them take an active part in the meetings; also that many of their people, as well as some of the English residents in Paris—including, of course, some of the English and American ministers—prove ready and efficient helpers; and, lastly, that the commissioners of police are prepared to authorise any number of these meetings. As one of them said, "We cannot do otherwise than welcome you to our quarter. You are aiming to do our work—to labour with us for the order and morality of the community."

Such an enterprise cannot be carried on without money; but never,

* In the report for 1873, Mr. McAll states that, out of 1,019 French meetings, he himself was able to conduct more than 500.

surely, was there a mission of similar extent carried on at a cheaper rate; and I verily believe that had the director the requisite means he would not accept a farthing of money from the public. As it is, he asks nothing for his own support; but for the salaries of his evangelists and helpers, for the rental of the *salles*, and for all other expenses, he depends on the sympathy and liberality of his friends in England. He publishes a report every year, with a carefully-audited balance-sheet;* but he is no beggar, having never written more than five or six appeals, not one of which met with any response from the wealthy men to whom they were addressed.

Hitherto, sufficient money has come in; and doubtless, if the work is of God, He will move the hearts of His people to support it. But now that the financial obligations are becoming every year more heavy, and the work of arranging and directing the Mission is increasing every month, it would seem to be high time that some step should be taken to relieve our friend of at least the pecuniary burden, and we trust that his sympathisers in England will soon take this matter in hand. The most robust health may break down under constant pressure of care and labour, and, for the sake of the Mission, as well as for the sake of our devoted brother and his wife, something should be done, and that speedily.

In conclusion, I beg to commend this singularly interesting enterprise to the earnest prayers and hearty sympathy of all the Churches. No one who has not actually seen something of this Mission can form any idea of the amount of self-sacrifice and incessant toil it requires for its proper performance. A house in a Parisian *faubourg* such as Belleville can hardly be converted into a *home*, in the English sense of the word. Perpetual journeyings in omnibuses and on tramways, day after day and night after night, the heat and excitement of meetings, the strain of speaking in a foreign language: all this, and much more, our friends and their co-workers—some of them young ladies, tenderly brought up in English homes—have to endure. Such examples of self-denial are deserving of imitation. Such heroic efforts call for hearty co-operation and support. In various ways the Churches in Paris are showing their appreciation of this Mission. Let our friends the McAlls, and all associated with them, feel that English Christians are equally appreciative, and are determined that, so far as pecuniary help is required, there need be no limit to the extension of this most wonderful movement. R. S. A.

[I shall be happy to receive any contributions for this work. They should be sent to me direct—R. W. DALE, Winterslow House, Bristol Road, Birmingham.—ED.]

* It would be well if English Christians would make the publication of a proper balance-sheet a condition of contributing to various Continental schemes, and if they would scrutinise the way in which their money is spent. *Verbum sap.*

DENOMINATIONAL AND BOARD SCHOOLS.

THE returns of the Education Department, showing the expenditure from the vote for public education upon building grants and annual grants to elementary schools, and the results of the inspection and examination of schools, carried down to the 31st of August, 1876, have recently been presented to Parliament.

A comparison of the number of schools (departments) inspected during the above year, with the corresponding number of the previous year, gives—

Schools.	Number year ending Aug. 1875.	Increase during 1876.	Per- centage Increase.	Percentage increased average attendance.
Denominational.....	17,323	734	4'2	2'8
Board	1,922	803	41'7	44'0

The average number of scholars in a denominational school is 91, in a Board school 120.

Of results, the most important are, of course, those derived from the individual examination of the children in the several Standards I. to VI.

The results of this examination of day schools in standards are given for Church of England, British, Roman Catholic, and Board schools separately, in Table 6. Scholars are examined in each standard in three subjects—reading, writing, and arithmetic. Out of every 100 scholars examined in each standard the average number who passed completely (*i.e.* in all three subjects) in the six standards was 61'84, 63'07, 50'55, 53'41, 53'35, 48'87 respectively.

Undoubtedly these figures do not warrant much satisfaction at the results achieved up to this point by our existing educational machinery; on the contrary, and especially when compared with the corresponding results under the Scotch code (these are 77'25, 78'7, 73'67, 58'23, 57'33, 59'35 per cent. for the six standards respectively), they leave us with an uneasy consciousness of the enormous amount of leeway still to be made up before England can lay claim to be an educated nation. Yet it will be a satisfaction to those who are working for greater efficiency, and believe that the School Board system is the best machinery for that purpose, to find that Board schools are already taking the lead, and that their percentages are higher than the average in all the standards, the excess in their favour being 1'15, 3'38, 4'56, 3'23, 3'12, '63 per cent. in the six standards respectively. Not only this, but Board schools have the highest percentage of complete passes in Standards II., III., IV., V., and are second only to Roman Catholic schools in Standard I., and to British schools in Standard VI.

Looking at the matter from another point of view, it is obvious that, as each child may pass in three subjects, the maximum number of passes obtainable by 100 children is 300. The actual numbers of passes obtained by 100 children was, in denominational schools, 235, or 78·3 per cent. ; in Board schools, 241, or 80·3 per cent. of attainable passes.

Again, comparing the passes in each subject, separately, the percentage of the whole number of scholars examined who passed in reading was 87·09 ; in writing, 79·42 ; in arithmetic, 70·15. Board schools stand ·9 below the average in reading, but are 2·07 above the average in writing, and 3·61 above in arithmetic, and are at the head of all the classes of schools in both these subjects, in arithmetic especially, *facile principes*.

In addition to the examination in standards there is an examination in not more than two higher subjects for scholars presented in Standards IV. to VI. This examination differs from the other in being optional. From the results given in Table 10, we gather that for every 100 scholars examined in higher subjects, 106·2 passes were obtained by denominational schools, and 108·2 by Board schools, giving a balance in favour of the latter of two passes per cent.

The tables of inspection give incidentally other tests of the comparative efficiency of denominational and Board schools. It is provided by the code that no payment shall be made for higher subjects if less than 75 per cent. of the passes attainable in the standard examination has been obtained. This proviso is an excellent one, and ensures due attention to the three R's throughout the school. Under this article 10·5 per cent. of the passes made by denominational schools earned no grant for their schools, the corresponding number for Board schools being only 9·3.

Other deductions are made from the grants for faults which interfere with the efficiency of schools, such as (1) being a portion of the year without a certificated teacher ; (2) faults of instruction, discipline, registration, &c. ; (3) deficiency in the amount of teaching staff required by the code. For these faults denominational schools were mulcted in 1·3 per cent. of the total grant earned by them, Board schools in ·76 only.

It will be readily understood that many of the results of sound methods of instruction, some of them of more lasting benefit than those rewarded by money payments, are such as to elude altogether the somewhat mechanical examination-process of the Government inspectors. Among these may be classed, the higher cultivation of the intelligence and the faculties of observation, reflection, and comparison, by object lessons and other studies not laid down by the code ; and also the employment of teachers of higher mental calibre, or more mature in age and attainments. No means exist of testing the presence of these higher results directly. We can only see under which system facilities are best afforded

for bringing such superior instruction to bear upon the unformed minds of the children.

These higher results will naturally be best attained by the following means, amongst others : (1) Attracting better-educated teachers by higher salaries ; (2) having a larger staff in proportion to the number of scholars ; (3) diminishing the proportion of pupil teachers of thirteen years of age and upwards, to the adult teaching staff ; (4) organising the school so that children of different ages may be graded, and taught under the several systems best adopted to their years. Now, with regard to the first point, Table 3 shows that higher salaries are paid in Board schools, but that the number of teachers provided with a house is not so great as in denominational schools. On the second head the Board schools show their superiority by the fact that the proportion of teachers to scholars in average attendance is 1 for every 30·6, whereas it is 1 for every 33·6 in denominational schools. There can be no doubt, too, that School Boards have shown a more enlightened policy by diminishing the proportion of the pupil teacher—*i.e.* juvenile teacher, element—and increasing that of the older and maturer assistant and certificated teacher. In denominational schools there are 61 scholars to every pupil-teacher, 551 to every assistant teacher, and 85 to every certificated teacher. In Board schools there are 52 to every pupil teacher, 459 to every assistant teacher, and 86 to every certificated teacher (Table 1). While on this point, it is a pleasure to give additional emphasis and publicity to the following words of the author (Sir J. Kay-Shuttleworth) of the celebrated “Minutes of 1846,” which legalised and stereotyped the pupil-teacher system in this country, who says : “The next step, which has been from the earliest period contemplated, is the gradual introduction of adult assistant teachers instead of pupil teachers” (*Fortnightly*, May, 1876).

With regard to the fourth point—school organisation—there is a marked difference between the systems of the two classes of schools. All educationists are agreed that the methods best adapted for the teaching of infants differ so much from those best suited for older children that the two can only be carried on in the same department, under the same teacher or set of teachers, at great disadvantage to both. Teaching by the Kindergarten method, by object lessons, by lessons set to a kind of drill or sing-song, all admirable for infants, act as a serious disturbing element when carried on side by side with the more sedate methods of teaching older children. The report of the Committee of Council on Education for 1874-5 (p. xi.) contains the following remarks upon this point : “The method of instruction for children over and under seven years of age ought to vary, and cannot be efficiently carried out in the same room ; so that every school, except the smallest, requires a separate department for its infants.” So strongly does the Education Depart-

ment feel upon this matter, that for some years past the code has contained a provision for a higher grant for infants—10s. instead of 8s.—if they are taught as a separate department by a certificated teacher of their own, in a room properly constructed and furnished for their instruction, instead of being taught as a class of a school.

Now the superiority of Board schools to denominational schools in this particular is most marked. From Table 6 we gather that, of infants presented in denominational schools, 23 per cent. more had been taught in a separate department than had been taught as a class; in Board schools as many as 177 per cent. more.

The definite and ascertained results which may be considered as tests of the comparative efficiency of the different classes of schools may be summarised as follows:—

(1) Board schools stand highest in the results of the examination in standards, having obtained the highest percentage of attainable passes.

They also passed the highest percentage of scholars completely in four out of the six standards, standing second in the other two standards.

(2) Taking the subjects separately, Board schools are slightly inferior to denominational schools in reading, but are superior to them in writing and arithmetic.

(3) In the examination in higher subjects, Board schools obtained a greater percentage of passes than the denominational schools.

(4) As compared with denominational schools, fewer Board schools teaching higher subjects, obtained less than 75 per cent. of attainable passes in the standard examination.

(5) Fewer Board schools were guilty of those breaches of the regulations of the code which are indicative of inefficiency.

(6) Board schools are better staffed and better organised.



CLERICAL ADVOCATES OF DISESTABLISHMENT.

THAT the ecclesiastical situation is very serious, and is daily becoming more so, is perceived by others beside those whose strong feelings, on one side or the other, might lead them to attach a special and possibly exaggerated significance to symptoms which men of calmer judgment would regard as extremely trivial. The *World* is not a journal which is likely to be excited on such a subject, and the mere fact that such a paper thinks it worthy of its attention—or, to put it differently, thinks that it will interest its readers—is itself an indication that the question as to the proper relations of Church and State is rapidly becoming the great question of the day. “The crisis,” says the *World*, “predicted for the Church of England in an early number of this journal

(Nov. 24, 1874) appears to have arrived, and in precisely the same form which we then indicated it would assume. The clerical address to the Bishops, and Mr. Carter's letter to the Primate, leave us in no doubt as to the character of the present priestly pretensions. . . . The demand is for ecclesiastical independence, the abdication by the State of its power over the Church, not as the result of any ostensible severance of their existing relations, but as the outcome of a tacit surrender of all secular prerogative." Of course, the journal takes the same view as to the answer which should be returned that is taken by the secular press in general, and that will be taken by every politician whose opinion has any weight. Intense Erastianism is the prevailing sentiment among the lay defenders of the Establishment. A certain section, of which those who have signed the memorial to Convocation are the leading representatives, have an exalted idea of Church rights; but it is numerically feeble, and certainly does not compensate for this weakness by its commanding influence. At the opposite extreme is the more numerous body of Evangelicals, led by the Earl of Shaftesbury; but, if its members have no sympathy with the indifference of pure Erastianism, they share all its strong antagonism to the exaggerated claims of the clergy, and would, though on other grounds, maintain the supremacy of the State quite as decidedly and earnestly as the Erastians themselves. There can be nothing to surprise us, therefore, in the loud and almost unanimous chorus of reprobation with which the protest of the High Church clergy, against what they deem the usurpations of the State, has been received. The political world does not recognise any such right in the Church, and it does not recognise the clergy, whether in their individual or in their corporate character in Convocation, as the "living voice of the Church," and it is prepared to meet them with determined resistance.

Nothing different from this, however, was to be expected. What is new and suggestive is the tacit assumption, which underlies the vehemence with which the clerical memorialists have been assailed all round, that the hollow compromise which has lasted for centuries is almost worn out. It could not have endured so long if one of the parties to it, perhaps all, had not been content to see things as they would have them, and not as they actually are. The severe pressure of events has been making short work of many of the deceptions which High Churchmen in particular have been accustomed to practise on themselves. They have been allowed to vapour about the authority of the Church, so long as they did not come into collision with the claims of the State. If they chose to dream of some special rights belonging to that pure branch of the Holy Catholic Church of which they are members, and to suppose that they are embodied in its clergy, they have been humoured in the fancies so long as it has been harmless for any practical purpose.

They now find that it is an entirely different matter when they claim to give effect to their theories, and, in doing so, treat the law of the land as a nullity, and the Courts which it establishes as usurpers. The moment they reach this point, statesmen see that it is high time to have done with pleasant words, and come to stern realities.

We cannot but feel a certain degree of pity for the clergy. They have been so long humoured in their assumptions, that it seems hard for them to be thus suddenly and rudely taught that no one outside their own circle believes in them at all. If our sympathy is at all qualified, it is because it seems to us that if they had they looked into the facts of the case they might have made the discovery for themselves long ago. Sir William Harcourt's tone is extremely offensive; but, if the clergy had not been blinded by an unwillingness to see what must be extremely unpleasant, they would not have needed him to teach such very unpalatable truths in so extremely irritating a manner. He tells them that the clergy are not the Church of England—that they are only the ministers of the Church of England. The reminder is doubtless disagreeable, but they might have escaped it if they had not suffered their clerical prepossessions to dominate their whole conception of the Establishment. He assures them, with a cynical frankness which is almost brutal, that “one of the most essential principles of the Reformation was that the clergy should not have a potential voice in the nomination of Bishops in this country, and if ever the clergy have a potential voice in the nomination of Bishops in this country the Church of England as an Establishment would cease to exist.” Now, Sir William Harcourt has been one of the great champions of the State Church, and his words are instructive on this account, if on no other. He is a perfect type of our Erastian politicians, the men who want an Establishment kept up, but who desire that it should have as little of the true Church element about it as possible. That there should ever have been a semblance of union between such men and ecclesiastics who believe in the Divine right of the Church, almost as strongly as Pius IX. himself, is passing strange. But it is now evident that the tension has become too severe, and it seems as though the ill-assorted alliance could hardly last much longer. Possibly, if some attack of Nonconformists on the central principle of the Establishment is to be resisted, we may see a temporary restoration of the old fellowship, and Sir Wm. Harcourt may once more be cheered on by the applause of the very body to whom he has been giving such humbling instruction. But this can only be a transient phase. The two parties have told each other too much of their real mind for the old harmony to be easily restored. The bond of fellowship has been rudely cut, and its severed strands will not easily be re-knit.

If anyone should doubt this, or should regard the present movement

as a kind of clerical panic, which is likely to subside as rapidly as it has arisen, he has only to read the *Guardian* to have such a mistake corrected. We say nothing of the fierce and passionate tirades of the *Church Times*, whose language is often so violent that it is not easy to determine how much of it the writers actually mean, and whose correspondents and supporters, of course, belong to the most extreme and impracticable section. The *Guardian* cultivates another tone, and the clergy who write so extensively in its columns are of a more moderate type. From their letters we may learn something of the state of feeling in those quiet country vicarages where High Churchmen are generally to be found, and where we may best learn the opinion which prevails in clerical circles. Judging from the trustworthy evidence furnished by the host of letters which the *Guardian* publishes, and which we suppose are only a sample of those it receives, it is clear that the iron of Erastianism has gone deeply into the hearts of men who seemed ready to endure everything rather than imperil the Establishment. The Public Worship Regulation Act, whether or not it may prove effective for "stamping out" Ritualism, has, at all events, extinguished the loyalty of numbers to a system of which hitherto they had been the most uncompromising defenders. It may seem to us a small matter to have produced results so grave, but of the fact there can be no doubt. The seeds of disaffection to the State which it scattered have been carried far and wide, and the harvest they are bearing is rank and luxuriant. The imprisonment of Mr. Tooth stimulated the growth and hastened the ripening. It is impossible now to say how long the harvest might have been delayed but for an event so untoward for the friends of the Establishment. But the release of the Vicar of Hatcham has not served to hinder the spread of the resentful antagonism to the State which his incarceration produced. Hundreds, not to say thousands, of the clergy brood over the insult which has been offered to their order, and the indignity which, in their judgment, has been done to the principles they most venerate. They fret under the conditions to which they are subject, and are impatiently seeking to find out some mode of deliverance. How many of them will be led to seek the only one that is feasible, it would be extreme rashness to say. But it would be as foolish to pooh-pooh their strong utterances, as to suppose that they indicate a readiness for Disestablishment. It is clear that numbers are simply groping in the dark. They are in the condition of men suddenly coming out of a brilliantly-lighted drawing-room into the thick darkness of a starless night, and it is very slowly indeed that their eye is so far adjusting itself to its altered surroundings as to discern anything clearly. But the process is going on; point after point is being perceived, and ere long they may be able to grasp all the facts of the situation.

Let us take, for example, such a case as that of Mr. Bryan King, whose declaration for Disestablishment called forth a remonstrance from the "Primus" of Scotland, who had the ineffable coolness to speak of the small but arrogant community to which he belongs as the "old Church of Scotland, which had long since been disestablished and disendowed." How such a claim could be verified on any principle except one that would allow to a Church any claim which its heads chose to prefer on its behalf, it is hard to say. For, if a mere question of descent is involved, the right of the Romish Church would be difficult to overthrow; and if popular will, as expressed through its Legislature, is to determine, certainly this little sect, which is continually obtruding itself on public notice by the extravagance of pretensions for which there is not a shadow of evidence, never had a title to be described as the Church of Scotland. The use of the name, and the suggestion that it ever was "disestablished and disendowed," are nothing short of an insult to the people of Scotland. The "Primus," however, holds up the experiences of his own sect as a warning to those Churchmen who talk so lightly of parting with the benefits of the Establishment. His "affectionate warning" is based upon the injury which Disestablishment would inflict upon the peasantry. But this is just the point on which his experience is worth nothing. The Scotch people never wanted his Church, rose up in revolt against their ancient sovereigns in order to get rid of it, and even in the blind fury of their Jacobite zeal made those Stuart pretenders, whom they served with a loyalty so ill-deserved and so badly requited, feel that, while they would fight to the death for them, they would never tolerate their Church. An experience gathered among such a people is simply worth nothing as a guide to what would take place in a country where Episcopalianism has such a strong hold on the traditional loyalty, as well as the religious convictions and sympathies, of a large number of the people. It may, therefore, reasonably be doubted, even among his own friends, whether the "Primus" is to be absolutely trusted when he warns them, "most advisedly, that if those who, smarting under a sense of present wrong, are seeking to bring about the disestablishment of the Church of England, should be successful in their endeavour, they will have incurred a fearful responsibility, and *will have inflicted an irreparable and lasting wrong upon the poor of Christ's flock.*"

The closing words are italicised by the "Primus" himself; but, emphatic as they are, they do not seem to have moved Mr. Bryan King, who writes as a man who has fully weighed the cost, and is prepared for whatever sacrifices the emancipation of the Church from its present bondage may entail. He does not, indeed, take the precise view which commends itself to the Liberation Society, and has probably formed too

sanguine an estimate as to what the Legislature would assign to a disestablished Church. He says: "In the present evenly-balanced state of parties, a combination between the great body of Dissenters, the bulk of the Liberal party, and even a small body of Churchmen, would be available to carry the question of Disestablishment, at the cost, perhaps, of some of the superfluous luxuries of endowment; but, certainly, no further." There could be no more delusive dream than this, and it is necessary that High Churchmen should understand it. In the first place, such a combination is not "available." Neither Nonconformists nor the Liberal party would enter into it. We need not avow our desire for Disestablishment; but we are not so anxious to get it immediately, nor are we so doubtful of the principles which lead us to contend for it, and of their certain and not distant triumph, as to clutch at an offer by accepting which we should have to surrender the undoubted rights of the nation. Disendowment should, as Nonconformists have always contended, be effected on equitable terms; but equity has two sides, and we are at least as anxious to see equity to the nation as to the clergy. To give the clergy freedom at the cost of a few of the "superfluous luxuries of endowment" would be to rob the people of a large property, and, if an alliance could be formed on such a basis, we doubt whether it could possibly prove successful.

Mr. Bryan King is equally wrong in his argument relative to the disendowment of the Irish Church. That was done, no doubt, "on the distinctly avowed grounds that those endowments, which had been given for the religious instruction of the entire people, had become, as a matter of fact, the possession of but one-fifth portion of the people." From this he derives encouragement, inasmuch as the case of England is entirely different, for his Church "certainly does reflect generally the religious convictions of the nation at large." This is one of those sweeping statements, evidently made in such perfect *bonâ fides*, and yet so contrary to fact, that they force us to regard those who make them as dwellers in a balloon. We are thankful, however, to Mr. Bryan King for his frank statement of the principle on which our argument relative to ecclesiastical endowments rests. Our contention is, that money or land given for the religious instruction of the whole people cannot be rightfully appropriated by a section, whether large or small. In Ireland the privileged sect had sunk to one-fifth: if in England it rise as high as one-half (and that, we believe, is the extreme), the alteration in the proportions does not touch the cardinal principle.

But, while compelled to dissent from Mr. Bryan King on these points, we all the more heartily, on that account, recognise the bold and manly way in which he faces the worst possible issue, and the frankness with which he professes his readiness to accept that, rather than bow to

the present tyranny. "But again I avow my readiness to face any consequences or contingencies whatever, rather than see the sacred deposit of the Church, in her faith and worship, betrayed to the Erastian control of the State; and I fail to see any prospect whatever of rescuing the Church from her present state of ungodly thralldom by any measure short of Disestablishment." It would be unfair to men who take such a position to try and hide from them what it implies. There is no possibility which we can see of their securing the freedom for which they so ardently long without the surrender, of course with due respect to life interests, of such national property as the Church at present holds. How much is included under that description we cannot undertake to discuss; but it is certainly far more than would be covered by the "superfluous luxuries of endowment." We do not complain that clergymen are very slow to see this, and continue to nurture hopes which to all beside seem purely visionary. All the traditions amid which they have grown up, all the ideas current in the circles to which they belong, tend to produce a strong confidence in their right to the property which their Church has held since the Reformation, and to fancy that it is her freehold, and not the estate of the nation. But they may be assured that these are not the views which Parliament would adopt in the event of Disestablishment; and it is satisfactory to find them prepared for the worst contingencies. Under any settlement, the Episcopal Church would no doubt retain a considerable property; but it is not to be doubted that the sacrifices she will have to make will be great.

One of the most thorough-going advocates of Disestablishment among the clergy is the Rev. T. W. Mossman; and the firm grasp of principles which he has evidently got, and the ability with which he defends them, reveal a mind of no ordinary liberality, independence, and power. With him the "present distress" seems to have comparatively little effect, or at least the position which he has reached has been gained by reasoning irrespective of it, and is far in advance of any point to which a mere vexation relative to the new Court, or the new Act, would conduct him. He does not even stop at Disestablishment, but writes in such a way as to show that his prejudices against Dissenters have been materially weakened. In his last pamphlet, entitled "Bishops by Act of Parliament and Letters Patent," one of the most outspoken, trenchant, and vigorous deliverances on Church questions with which it has been our good fortune to meet for some time past, he thus writes of Dissenters:—

"I used, of course, in days gone by, to have the same ideas as the Bishop of Lincoln, and other High Churchmen, about this question of schism. When I first went into my country parish a young deacon, many years ago, I used to say, in all the houses of my Dissenting parishioners, 'It grieves

me more than I can express to think you are living in a state of separation from Christ's Holy Catholic Church." And I think it speaks well for Dissenters that I never knew one who was really angry at this outspokenness. I need scarcely say that such language has long been a stranger to my lips, and I sometimes marvel how I could ever have used it. But being of a somewhat reflective turn of mind, I began to feel that the Church of England did not live in a house so entirely devoid of glass windows that she could afford recklessly to hurl stones at her neighbours all round. Thus I have come at length to the conclusion that this question of schism is one that, at present at least, is altogether too hard for me as a priest of the Church of England, *and that I had better let it alone.*"

More decided still, if possible, is his language concerning the Establishment:—

"For my part, I think the holiest crusade which anyone can preach in these days is a crusade against any control of ecclesiastical and spiritual matters by the State, or temporal governments. In other words, I pronounce for the disestablishment of the Church of England *at any cost*. So far as the Church of England is an establishment, I believe the angels have already left her. Why should we care to tarry in a house which the State has made desolate indeed? Will our temporal endowments make up to us for the loss of the angels' presence?"

For the present there may be few in the Established Church, or at all events among its clergy, to sympathise with Mr. Mossman. But that such a voice should come from a Lincolnshire rectory, and from a devout and learned member of the High Church party, is a sign of the times. It is impossible that it can be raised in vain, or fail to arouse a sympathetic feeling in numbers of true hearts within the Establishment as well as outside. In the presence of such a spiritual force the polished elegance or cynical unconcern of a semi-sceptical Erastianism will be as chaff driven before the wind.



ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

THE fate of the Burials Bill is not yet decided, though it is quite possible that it may be before these pages reach our readers, not that we expect a defeat of the Government in the Lords, or even a damaging division, but we greatly doubt whether the measure will advance much further than a second reading in the Upper House. The clergy, generally, like it, as they ought to do, for it is a sop thrown to them. That it does not please Nonconformists is a small matter, for it was not even pretended that the Bill had any such design. But it is whispered that the farmers—who do not see the sense of an addition to their local rates, and if they were polled would rather have any change in the Burial Laws than in-

crease their rates by a sixteenth of a farthing—are restive, and that some of their Conservative representatives in the House are anxious therefore to hear no more of the Bill. In the meantime, the Duke of Richmond has postponed the second reading because of the meeting of the Northern Convocation. He was so staggered by Earl Granville's violation of the proprieties and departure from the precedents in proposing to affirm an antagonistic principle as an amendment to the second reading, that he thought it necessary to wait until the Archbishop of York and his suffragans could be present at the discussion. Tell us that the Church derives no benefit from the State after that ! As both sides cannot be represented by their chief ministers, equity would seem to require that neither should, and that the Bishops should absent themselves from such a debate just as magistrates withdraw from the Bench when anything affecting themselves has to be decided, and as in fairness they ought to do when any question that bears on their own order is to be submitted. But in this case it is assumed that the Bishops must be present, and that Parliament must wait for them. Why are they Peers of Parliament, except for the purpose of defending the monopoly of their Church ? So the Duke of Richmond and Gordon postpones the discussion till their lordships can leave the Convocation of York. What other and more private reasons there may have been for delay we do not care to inquire. But we do heartily thank Earl Granville for the bold move by which he has given check to his adversary. It required a little courage, especially in these days of Fabian warfare, when to avoid an adverse vote seems to be regarded as the *chef d'œuvre* of Opposition chieftainship. It is a hopeful sign that ecclesiastical politics seem to furnish the only ground on which the Liberal party can thoroughly unite.

What comes of the Bill is a subordinate matter, but we must take care to profit by the opportunities which its discussion affords, to give instruction, which appears to be greatly needed, and to inculcate sound principles which may be useful some other day. The clergy, in their diocesan conferences and elsewhere, will persist in talking of us as desiring to intrude into their burial grounds. What is most extraordinary, they seem to find Dissenters to sustain them. Thus Prebendary Eddrup told the Salisbury Conference that a Dissenting farmer in his parish had signed a petition against Mr. Osborne Morgan's Bill saying, "Why should I not sign it ? We should not like you to come against our will into our chapel yards, and why should we, then, try to force ourselves into your churchyards ?" We do not know who is most to be pitied, the farmer, who knew so little of his co-religionists, and was so lacking in sympathy with them as to suppose them capable of thus desiring to obtrude into the private cemeteries of their neighbours,

or the clergyman who could quote such remarks with approval, and so identify himself with the idea that this is a mere battle of the sects, in which Dissenters desire to make a raid upon the property of their rivals. In taking such ground the defenders of the National Church weaken their own position, while at the same time they do injustice to their opponents. The Establishment does not profess to be a privileged sect, but a National Church; and, as a mere matter of expediency it would be wise to allow all the people to participate, as far as possible, in the advantages it has to offer. Admission to the burial grounds would not, if conceded in this spirit, have strengthened in the slightest degree a claim to other benefits, say, the enjoyment of the churches. It would have been nothing more than a graceful concession, which would have done something to mitigate the asperity of sectarian controversy. By it the clergy would practically have said, "We cannot abandon the principle of a National Church, and unfortunately it appears that we cannot reconcile you to it. But we will make the distinction as inoffensive as possible, and in order to do this, we will allow you the same freedom in the national graveyards as we ourselves enjoy." They have taken the contrary course, and nothing remains now but to fight the battle to the bitter end. Compromise is neither practicable nor desirable. The clergy would not hear of it when it was not only possible, but might really have been an advantage to their cause. To do them justice, they do not want it now. Lord Shaftesbury no doubt means well, and his conversations with Mr. Morley must have been "extremely interesting." But it would be a mistake to regard him as entitled to speak on behalf of the clergy or the Government. Indeed, no sooner had the possibility of a compromise been suggested, than the *Record* gave us distinctly to understand that nothing of the kind was contemplated. We are very glad of it, for any such attempt in that direction would only be "love's labour lost." In the meantime we gladly acknowledge the nobler spirit shown by some of the clergy. The speech of the Dean of Chester in the Northern Convocation was as creditable to his sagacity as to his Christian liberality. The letter of another clergyman in the *Times* was, in fact, nothing but an expression of the views of an extreme Liberatorist at the meeting of the Central Nonconformist Committee in the Birmingham Town Hall.

Mr. Barran deserves credit for his determination not to allow the case of priestly tyranny at Boston Spa to be dismissed in the light and jaunty style in which Lord Sandon would have treated it. It would, doubtless, have been very satisfactory to the Vice-president, who is never provoked to depart from his characteristic courtesy and even gentleness, except when he has to defend the Establishment from some assault, if he could have screened the offending vicar from well-merited

public exposure. But the new member for Leeds very properly considered that no private explanations which could be offered would be satisfactory. On every ground it was necessary that the affair should be probed to the bottom, and the answer which Lord Sandon gave to the question abundantly justifies the urgency with which it was pressed. His lordship tell us that it is difficult to decide between the conflicting reports of the transaction which have reached him ; but the facts, which are undisputed, place the conduct of the vicar in even a worse light than before. It seems that the affair has arisen out of a paltry quarrel, in which a wise man would never have condescended to embroil himself. The vicar's wife had some prize poultry killed by cats ; thereupon a prize was offered for the head of any offending cat, and a favourite tabby of the unfortunate Dissenter happened to be the first victim. Irritated by this, the aggrieved man ordered his child not to curtsy to the vicar's wife in the street, and the result was its expulsion from the school by order of the vicar, backed up, as it now appears, by three lay managers, who are not ashamed to sustain the priest in this act of shameful tyranny, which was followed by the dismissal of the master, who refused to have any part in it. We are happy to find that Lord Sandon disapproves their conduct, and advises them to receive the child back ; but we regret that he neutralises his own counsel by declining to make the continuance of the grant to the school dependent upon the compliance of the managers with his wishes. His Lordship follows too closely the example of his colleague, the Foreign Secretary, who deals with Turks in precisely the same way, and he may think himself fortunate indeed if he does not meet with the same kind of rebuff at Boston Spa as Lord Derby has encountered at Constantinople. Parliament, however, has a control in the one case to which it can lay no claim in the other, and though, for the present, Liberalism is powerless, the day is not very distant when these clerics may repent of the freaks they are playing in this brief day of Tory ascendancy. If a Conservative Ministry will not teach them that these schools are not their own preserves, others will be sure ere long to give them a lesson which is essentially necessary. They are coming to regard schools which the nation helped so largely to build, and is helping so largely to support, as part of the freehold which they possess, and, unless they are watched and checked, will soon assert the same rights in them as in churches and churchyards. So far as the buildings are concerned, we fear that this cannot now be remedied, but the manager of these sectarian schools must be made to understand that if the schools are to remain as part of the educational apparatus of the nation, they must be absolutely under the control of the State. So long as they receive public money, it is not to be tolerated that they should be made instruments of priestly oppression.

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

Ulrich von Hutten: His Life and Times.

By DAVID FRIEDRICH STRAUSS.
(Translated by Mrs. G. STURGE.)
London: Daldy, Isbister, & Co.
(Price 10s. 6d.)

DR. STRAUSS fell out of sympathy with New Testament Christianity, because indeed, being a critic of "vigour and rigour," he could not make this Christianity square with a "vigorous and rigorous" theory; but, from the very nature which in this case ran wild, he was always in sympathy with free thought, the progress of culture, and everything which tended to deliver men and nationalities from the trammels of political or ecclesiastical tyranny. The first edition of this book came out at the time of the Concordat—"that servile contract with Rome, with which, after Austria had taken the lead, the other States of Germany were threatened." The author sought thus, in 1848, to encourage his countrymen, amid "the miscarriage of popular hopes in Germany, by the study of Ulrich von Hutten, the scholar-knight and free-lance poet of the Reformation period, literary fellow-worker with Reuchlin and Erasmus, ardent ally of Luther, and companion-in-arms of Franz Von Sickingen, that last of the barons, a strange, daring, indomitable man of queerly-checkered nature and adventures; buoyant in mind, stout in heart, quick with blows, alike ready with tongue, pen, and arm; a type of dauntlessness in defying might, but above all, in every circumstance of life, and to the bitter end, never failing in the unquenchable glow of his passionate desire to see the German fatherland freed from outlandish trammels, notably those of Rome." And in these days, too, when the Pope's spiritual power does not seem to have lost by the lopping off of the temporal, but ever shows itself still the foe of intellectual progress and national prosperity, Dr. Strauss has once more invoked the figure of the stalwart champion of individual and national freedom. In the second

edition, from which Mrs. Sturge has taken her translation, the long extracts from Hutten's writings have been omitted, because the first edition was soon followed by an issue of Hutten's works, to which the reader of the second may refer for himself. Many corrections, moreover, have been made, but the ground plan of the work remains the same.

It will be seen from the extract given above that the portrait of Hutten is no mere panegyric. Not only the fine features, but the spots and wrinkles appear. Hutten was a man to aim high, and often hit low; at times to aim wildly, and not hit at all. His tempestuous life and his tempestuous character acted and reacted on one another. Born and reared amid coarse and lawless surroundings, his poetic spirit fought against the monastic life which his parents urged upon him, and his wanderings, after escaping from the monastery at Erfurt, and being thereupon renounced by his family, have all the elements of a romance. The privations he suffered suggested his early poetry, and he emulated Ovid in his "Tristia;" some thought he even excelled him. *Facit indignatio versus*, might have headed what he wrote upon his treatment by the Lotzes, and upon the murder of his cousin Hans by Duke Ulrich of Wurtemberg, against whom he carried on a long and fruitless agitation. But personal and family wrongs speedily gave way to those of nation and fatherland, and in time the Latin, which his humanistic tendencies made a natural language for him, yielded to his mother-tongue. One of the greatest points in the biography is the way in which Hutten's literary activity is depicted side by side with the events which continually prompted it. In this way we have specimens of Hutten's share in Reuchlin's contest with the Cologne theologians; of his biting contributions to that unsurpassed treasury of anti-scholastic and anti-Papal satire, the "*Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*" ("The Letters of the

Nobodies"), of his Letters to Luther and Erasmus, his conflict with the latter, his threats hurled in defence of Luther at Worms, and of his Dialogues, of which Franz Von Sickingen was the hero. Here is a sample of the mockery, which may be found in the "Letters" mentioned above—letters supposed to be written in the most inimitably bad Latin, by the anti-humanist opponents of Reuchlin, who put both Greek and Hebrew under ban, and were of those who could say of Hutten, "He is a poet, he speaks Greek, and therefore he cannot have much Christianity": "Sometimes," says Dr. Strauss, "conscientious scruples gave rise to these subtle (scholastic) discussions. Somebody," who writes one of these letters, "eats an egg in which the chick was developed. He remembers that it is Friday, and his conscience is troubled. A friend consoles him by saying that unhatched chickens are no worse than the grubs in cheese or cherries, which may may happen to be swallowed in Lent. But he is not satisfied, and applies [in this letter] to Ortuin (a mean spirited humanist, to whom these letters are feigned to be written, and who sold his classics to the opponents of culture and Reuchlin): for worms, he has been told by a doctor who is considered a good naturalist, belong to the order of fishes, which may be eaten in fast time, whereas the developed chick in an egg is forbidden meat." For other specimens of the humour of these Letters, to which Hutten was, however, only one of three contributors, and of Hutten in other moods, we must refer our readers to the book itself; or, if they grow tired of summaries and analyses, a sphere in which an abridged biography unavoidably becomes less interesting, they must betake themselves to Bocking's edition of Hutten's works. But, apart from this minor and irremediable deficiency, the picture which is presented of Hutten, through all the changes of his eventful and earnest life, the picture of a man of eloquent words and enthusiastic action, and whose words were never penned or uttered except as a prelude to action, is one which has been deservedly "copied"

for our English gallery, and which will most surely arrest the attention of every beholder.

The translation reads excellently,—a merit which we heartily wish could even generally be ascribed to those German-English, and withal, grossly inaccurate translations (so-called), which are now so plentifully scattered over England, and from which we so often have to appeal to the original writer, that he may defend his perspicuity and common sense. Mrs. Sturge has been added to our list of good translators: is it too much to hope that our publishers of translations may some day come to prefer, as a rule, one who is proficient in the German tongue, to some one who makes a *corpus vile* of a difficult German theological work? We are not quite so sure of Mrs. Sturge's Latin: is she or the printer responsible for *Beata Tranquillitatas*, which occurs *twice*, and therefore looks a little suspicious?

Life in the Southern Isles. By the Rev. WILLIAM WYATT GILL, B.A. London: Religious Tract Society. (Price, 5s. 6d.)

A MOST attractive book. It is just what is wanted to develop in young people an intelligent interest in Christian missions.

The Life of a Scotch Probationer, being a Memoir of Thomas Davidson, with his Poems and Extracts from his Letters. By JAMES BROWN. Glasgow: James Maclehose. (Price, 6s.)

IT is very rarely that we meet with so touching and beautiful a memoir as this. Mr. Davidson was a man of true poetic genius, of noble moral character, and deep religious earnestness. His Life illustrates one of the chief glories of Scotland. Born of parents who were distinguished by the virtues of the Scottish peasantry, he found his way to the University, and held his own among the sons of the wealthy. Unhappily he died young, but not too young to win many hearts and to prove the possession of rare powers. Mr. Brown has told the story of his friend's brief life with perfect taste and feeling.

The Congregationalist.

JUNE, 1877.

GERMAN PROTESTANTISM.

THE formation of a German Empire is a fact of momentous importance. To the politician it means the establishment of a great power in the very centre of Europe, by which the future destiny of Continental nations will be largely determined. Regarded from a religious point of view, its consequences are likely to lead to very decisive issues. Rome has begun to see that a united Fatherland may prove a very formidable obstacle to its onward progress. Indeed, the existence of the empire is a proof of the waning fortunes of the Papacy. When Pio Nono was losing one portion of his temporal dominions after another, and nothing remained to him but a limited district of Italy, it was resolved to summon a council and raise the oft-debated notion of Papal infallibility into one of the fundamental dogmas of the Church. By this means it was hoped that the devotion of the faithful would be intensified, and an enthusiasm roused on behalf of their demi-god that might lead eventually to the recovery of his lost provinces, or at least make the whole Catholic world more entirely subservient to the behests and plans of its spiritual head. This end would at least be attained,—the Syllabus, with its condemnation of all modern notions of liberty, political, social, and religious,—would henceforth have the force and stringency of a divine command, and might be employed as an instrument for the re-enthralment of mankind. Contemporaneously with the imposition of this new dogma, it was resolved—so at least we believe that future historians will read the course of events—to precipitate the inevitable conflict between France and Germany, in the full assurance that the eldest son of the Church would effect the humiliation of his

neighbour, whose increasing power was regarded as directly inimical to the interests of Rome. To the utter dismay of these Ultramontane plotters, the Pope lost the last vestiges of temporal sovereignty, and the Power that was to have been crushed came out of the conflict victorious to an extent which its own friends could not have foreseen. Prussia thus obtained the hegemony in the comity of European nations.

Among the leaders of the Romish Church in Germany this unexpected issue of events awakened, it would seem, a determination to profit by the exceptional freedom allowed them, and to employ their influence with a view to undermine the authority of the Government and sap the foundations of the fabric that had attained such alarming proportions. But the watchful eye of the German Chancellor speedily detected these crafty designs, and counteractive measures were at once set on foot for the purpose of lessening the power of these enemies of the State. By many persons in this and other countries Prince Bismarck has been severely blamed for his high-handed dealings and for his alleged disregard of the principles of religious liberty. It should, however, be borne in mind that he has done nothing more than withdraw from the Romish Church some privileges which former Governments had granted to it, but not to the Protestant Church; and further, that in legislating as he did for both Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, he was simply acting as a statesman, who, finding himself in the position of virtual ruler of both Churches, determined that, so far as regulations and restrictions can secure it, neither Church shall be in a position to use its influence to lessen the Imperial authority, or to tamper with the patriotism of the nation. The Falk laws, as they are termed, do not interfere with the exercise of religious duties or the enforcement of religious doctrines. Their sole purpose is to serve as a protection and safeguard to the State. Christianity, whether in the Protestant or Popish sense of the term, is not affected by them. The two Churches are State organisations, and as such they must expect the State to lay down rules for their guidance and to define the limits within which their power and authority shall be exercised.*

The name given in German to this great conflict—*Kulturkampf*—shows that it is not so much a battle between Protestantism and Romanism, after the fashion of that waged by Luther, as one between modern ideas and Ultramontane pretensions. Further, the complaint made by the Protestants that their Church has been more hardly dealt with than the Romish, shows that Prince Bismarck has not been employing Protestant weapons with which to checkmate his wily foe. The question, therefore, of Protestantism with which we have to deal in this

* I think that my able correspondent judges the Falk laws far too leniently.—ED.

paper is but little affected by this strenuous attempt to hold Rome in check and to maintain the authority of the Emperor.

The Old Catholic movement has naturally enough awakened much interest in this country, and has been hailed by many as destined to lead to the formation of a Protestant Episcopal Church, in which the vast mass of German Catholicism will become merged. But as its influence at the present moment appears to be restricted to a very small area, and as its progress during the last two years [gives but little hope of its speedy extension throughout the Empire, it is not a subject that can be said to have any direct connection with the condition and prospects of German Protestantism—the topic on which we shall venture to dwell in this and probably a second paper. We say *venture*, because we are painfully aware of the difficult nature of our task. We have to examine the religion of the majority of the German nation, and to consider how far it is permeated with the spirit of Evangelical Christianity and is able to purify and ennoble the general life of the nation. We have to view it in its relation to the rising tide of free thought and materialism, and to the unceasing efforts of the Church of Rome. We have to remember, too, that Germany is composed of many kingdoms and provinces, in each of which Protestantism has had its own history, and has consequently developed forms of Church life and activity peculiar to itself. With a subject of such complexity we can hope to do little more than present a few general outlines and a brief summary of facts, from which our readers may gather some idea of the condition and prospects of the German section of the great Christian family.

In point of numbers, Protestantism holds a commanding position in Germany. Out of a population in 1875 of 42,758,000 souls, 25,600,000 are professedly Protestants. But their distribution is unequal. In some districts—*e.g.* in Rhenish Prussia, Westphalia, Posen, and Silesia, also in Baden and Bavaria—the Catholics are nearly twice as numerous as the Protestants, while in others almost the whole population belongs to the Evangelical or Lutheran Churches. The relative proportion between the two religions remains much the same as at the close of the Thirty Years' War. The truce then entered into has been largely observed on both sides, and each has left the other free to pursue its own course, without any direct attempt at proselytism. Even now, though much activity, as we shall see, prevails in many Protestant circles, nothing whatever is being done for the evangelisation of the Romanist portion of the population. The British and Foreign Bible Society is the only organisation whose agency attempts to cover the whole field of German life.

In a country where the State is so solicitous for the welfare of its members, and takes them so completely under its tutelage as in the Fatherland, it might be supposed that ample provision would be made

for the religious culture as well as the ordinary education of all the citizens. But though the schools of Germany are abundant,* and the instruction given is of the most thorough kind, Church provision is largely deficient, and especially among the Protestant section of the community and in the large cities of the Empire. The whole number of clergy is about 15,000, or one clergyman for every 1,600 Protestants, while among the Roman Catholic section of the population the proportion is one priest to 777 Catholics. The excessive care of the State for its Romish members is also seen very strikingly in the amount of money granted, until quite recently, for the support of the Catholic Church. In 1872 this was 865,062 thalers (£129,750). The Protestant Church, on the other hand, received only 628,497 thalers (£94,275). But the strangest and most startling fact connected with the State provision for religion is, that it is chiefly deficient in the most Protestant part of the Empire, viz. Prussia, and, above all, in the chief city of Prussia—Berlin. A few figures will make this apparent. In Bavaria there is one Protestant clergyman to 1,041 souls; in the eight provinces of Northern Germany, including the province of Prussia, the proportion is 1 clergyman to 1,865 souls; in Prussia itself it is 1 to 3,104. But if we confine our attention to Berlin, we find that in the Imperial city, the residence of the pious Emperor, there were in 1874 only 118 clergy (of these some are chaplains connected with public institutions) for the 870,000 people, supposed to be Protestants. In 1876 the number of ministers had decreased, so that then there was only one clergyman to 7,300 souls, and barely one church or chapel for 13,600 souls. It is clear, therefore, that the State has grossly neglected its self-imposed duty. Population has advanced with rapid strides, and in every other department than that of religion there has been a corresponding development, and additional means have been provided for the instruction of the young, for the promotion of order, and for the protection of the country. For the Church little more has been done than to maintain its existing agencies. Thus, in Prussia at least, the State has miserably failed to secure for its Protestant citizens those sources of religious instruction, help, and comfort, which the paternal character of the Government might have led one to look for. Nor have the activity and liberality of the members of the National Church done much to supplement this deficiency. No great church building schemes have been started, as in our country.† The voluntary system has yet to be tried in Germany, both in the National Church and out of it. Dissent in

* 60,000 elementary schools, and 6,000,000 scholars.

† Of the labours of the Gustavus Adolphus Society we shall have something to say further on.

our sense of the term is almost unknown. There is no large body of Free Churches to form a stimulus to the members of the State Church, and to rouse the whole country to a serious attention to the claims of religion. Of late years missions, supported by English and American Baptists and American Methodists, have resulted in the formation of about 200 Churches, with a membership of 35,000 persons. But these communities exercise as yet but little influence. Thus the people are virtually left to the tender mercies of the State to provide them with religious institutions.*

But the inadequate provision for the spiritual necessities of the nation is not the only distressing feature of the case. The number of candidates for the ministry has been decreasing with most marked regularity from year to year; and if statistics were our only means of forming an opinion respecting the future, we should be compelled to admit that in a certain number of years the supply of clergy will wholly fail, and the pulpits of the land will all be vacant. Such a calamitous issue will never, we trust, be reached. Long ere that day arrives, a spirit of renewed zeal and energy will surely take possession of the Christian people of Germany, and God will raise up men of holy enthusiasm, whose trumpet-call to repentance and a new life will stir the soul of the whole nation, and bring about a second reformation, more glorious and more lasting than the first. Meanwhile, the Church authorities are in great perplexity. Many pulpits are vacant,† and no candidates are forthcoming. In some provinces, as in Hanover and Saxe-Weimar, several parishes are being grouped together, and placed under the care of one clergyman,—a method of supplying a lack of agents that may appear tolerably satisfactory, where, as is the case in Hanover and

* A few additional statistics may not be out of place as illustrative of the insufficiency of the State provision for religion. In Lutheran Hanover, with a Protestant population (census of 1871) of 1,714,000, there are 1,573 churches and chapels, and 1,111 clergy, or 1 clergyman to 1,400 Protestants. In Würtemberg, where, as we shall show, much religious life and activity prevail, there are 1,250,000 Protestants, 1,235 churches and chapels, and 1,116 clergy, or an average of 1,380 Protestants to each parish, while the provision for the Roman Catholics is such that the Catholic parishes do not contain more than 568 souls. Again, between 1842 and 1862, twenty new churches were built, but during the last fifteen years not more than six! In Saxe-Weimar, only two new churches were erected in 1869-73. In Schleswig-Holstein there are nearly a million of Protestants, and only 416 churches and chapels, and about 398 clergy. But to understand the real condition of affairs, it must be borne in mind that the 400,000 Lutherans of Schleswig have nearly twice as many churches as the 550,000 Lutherans of Holstein. This latter district is perhaps the most spiritually destitute of any in Germany, while Thuringia is the most highly favoured.

† In 1874 there were 282 churches without ministers in Prussia alone. The whole number of the clergy was then 8,409.

among the Lutherans, salvation is believed to depend so largely on the due administration of the sacraments, but which in other respects looks something like a robbery of Peter to pay Paul.

Again, humanly speaking, the decrease in the number of the clergy is likely to proceed at a greater rate in the future than in the past, owing to the serious diminution in the salaries of ministers caused by the new laws relating to marriage and baptism. Formerly, marriage at church and the baptism of children were compulsory, and the fees paid for these rites made up a large part of the clergyman's stipend. Now, both ceremonies being optional, the loss to the ministers is very great. Thus we read of one case in which the sum received fell from 1,388 thalers (£208) to 574 thalers (£77); and though this may be an extreme case, yet in almost every province so great has been the disposition of the people to dispense with the services of a Church in which they have long ceased to believe, that the clergyman has found himself in a most unpleasant and trying position. Various methods have been adopted to compensate for this diminution of salaries, which at the best were very inadequate. Increased Church taxes have been imposed, but it must be added that in many cases this fresh charge has been greatly resented, and in Hesse the Protestants are moving heaven and earth to do away with this additional burden. In face, then, of diminished salaries, and of a disposition to let the minister live on a miserable pittance barely sufficient to keep off starvation, one cannot greatly wonder at the unwillingness of young men to offer themselves for the ministry.

Thus far, our review of German Protestantism has not brought to light much that is cheering. Most inadequate provision made by the State Churches for the spiritual necessities of the Protestant portion of the people, an almost utter absence of anything like a great dissenting body able to make up for the shortcomings of the National Church, a growing disinclination on the part of multitudes in the large centres of population to avail themselves of the services of the clergy in the most solemn events of their lives, and a rapid and alarming decrease in the number of theological students at the Universities, are the points to which our attention has been directed.

We now proceed to glance at the inner life of the Church, and in order to a better understanding of the present state of affairs, let us take a brief retrospect of the past seventy years: At the beginning of the century spiritual death pervaded the whole land. The few earnest Christians scattered here and there must have felt much as Elijah did when he imagined that he was the only worshipper of the true God left in the land. The outward form of religion prevailed perhaps to as great an extent as at the present day, but its life had departed. Rationalism of the most decided type held possession of almost every pulpit. Paulus

was doing outrage to the Gospel by his pretended explanations of its facts. Spiritual darkness reigned. But a change was at hand. The nation, humbled by its reverses and suffering from French brutality, began to consider its miserable condition and to ask how patriotism might be revived. There was a general movement among the dry and scattered bones. Men began to ask whether Germany might not rise again, and become a great, free, and united country. In the philosophical world powerful minds were inaugurating a new era. Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel were exploring with marvellous acuteness and irrepressible daring the whole realm of metaphysical thought. New horizons seemed to be opening up, and a new scheme of the universe to be on the point of being discovered. Contemporaneously with this political and philosophical activity, the conviction was forming in many minds that the trouble from which the nation was suffering arose from the general forgetfulness of God and the neglect of Christian duty. But the first real revival, if so it may be called, took place in 1817, on the occasion of the holding a national festival in memory of the Reformation. A religious and patriotic fervour was enkindled in many of the Universities, and the whole people seemed stirred by a new and mighty impulse.

One of the principal agents through whom a better era was ushered in was Schleiermacher, whose Discourses, published in 1799, were among the first means of reawakening an interest in the subject of religion. By subsequent publications, such as his Monologues and his Dogmatics, he thoroughly destroyed the influence of the old rationalistic school, and presented religion as a life rather than a belief. Of his first-mentioned work it has been said: "These discourses—the production of a mind that united in itself the greatest intellectual freedom with an incontestable depth of religious feeling—contain an entirely new world of ideas. By proclaiming that God is directly present in the conscience, that we carry in our souls the treasure of the infinite, that religion is the consciousness of the finite as part of the infinite, and oftentimes as an element of eternity, Schleiermacher rises at one bound above the opposition of the natural and the supernatural in the discussion of which the wisdom of the day exhausted itself. With one stroke he overturns the frail structure of rationalism and the old fortress of orthodoxy." *

Study was now largely turned to the person of Christ. New schools of thought and inquiry arose; men like Neander, Nitzsch, Twisten, Hengstenberg, and Tholuck, gathered around them large numbers of the rising ministry, and eventually sent them forth to labour amongst

* Lichtenberger, "*Histoire des Idées Religieuses en Allemagne*," t. II. p. 123.

their fellow-countrymen in a truly earnest and evangelical spirit. Nothing can well be more surprising and cheering than the change that has come over German theology and the German pulpit since 1817. In almost every part of the empire are now to be found men who proclaim Jesus Christ as the Divine Saviour, and the Bible as the all-sufficient rule of faith, while in the department of theology nothing can well surpass the power with which the richness and beauty of Evangelical Christianity are unfolded in the prelections of many of the most distinguished professors at the Universities. Biblical criticism has become in the hands of German divines of recent years a real science, which is daily leading to a more rational interpretation of Scripture than was common among our forefathers. The study of ecclesiastical history has been pursued with unwearied diligence, and with most valuable results. In "Apologetics," many able replies have been written to the destructive labours of Strauss, Baur, Feuerbach, and others. And thus during the last fifty years Germany has presented the spectacle of unexampled theological activity and fertility. The time is not far distant when some worthy men amongst us decried every theological work issuing from the German press as subversive of the fundamental beliefs of the Christian world, but now almost every minister throughout the land gladly confesses his indebtedness to the writings of German theologians. Olshausen, Tholuck, Delitzsch, Meyer, Lange, Neander, Stier, Kurz, and a host of others have become our teachers, while almost every page of the writings of our own English theologians shows how largely they have availed themselves of the results of German research and criticism.

Other indications of a revived spiritual life among the German people are to be found in the numerous missionary and other societies that have sprung into existence of late years. In the department of foreign missions Germany (inclusive of Basel) holds no mean place. Nearly one-fourth of all the missionary agents in heathen lands are sustained by German and Swiss societies. On the other hand, only one-tenth of the whole sum raised for foreign missions comes from Germany and Switzerland, or perhaps it would be fairer to say that the German societies are carried on in a less expensive fashion, so that while they can maintain 500 missionaries and their stations at a cost of £107,000 (£214 each), in this and other countries 1,500 missionaries cost £963,000 (£642 each).

But it is in the department of Home, or, as they term them, Inner Missions, that German Christians display the largest amount of activity. Due, in the first instance, to the suggestion of Dr. Wichern, these missions have been carried on since 1848 with great energy, and have gradually covered the whole of Protestant Germany with a network of useful institutions. Almost every conceivable kind of evangelical and

benevolent work is performed, but nearly all the operations may be grouped under one or other of the following heads:—

(1) Societies of *saving* love (*Vereine der rettenden Liebe*), including reformatories and societies for the help of discharged prisoners (there are nearly 30 of these) ; Magdalen asylums.

(2) Societies of *guarding* love (*Vereine der bewahrenden Liebe*), including infant schools and *crèches*, Christian inns (127 in 1876) (*Herberge zur Heimath*), servants' training institutes, young men's associations.

(3) Societies of *winning* love (*Vereine der gewinnenden Liebe*), asylums for idiots (32), epileptics, the blind (17), the deaf and dumb (69).

(4) Establishments for the training of workers—such as deacons' institutes (15, with about 1,600 brethren under training), and deaconesses' institutes (55 in 1874, with 2,700 sisters).

In immediate connection with these departments are the organisations for the establishment of Sunday-schools, for the sanctification of the Lord's-day, town missions, and many other kindred operations. The history of some of these establishments is a very interesting one, and has been graphically described by De Liefde in "The Charities of Modern Europe," a work of unparalleled interest, and also in Stevenson's well-known volume entitled "Praying and Working."

Of the Gustavus Adolphus Society and its work, and also of some of the special features of the religious life of certain parts of Germany we purpose speaking in another paper.

F. S. A.



UNIVERSITY LOCAL EXAMINATIONS.

III.

WE promised in our last article under this heading to give some suggestions as to the mode in which a play of Shakespeare should be studied. And we chose this subject because it so frequently happens that persons who would feel perfectly at home in setting about the study of a Greek, or Latin, or French author, are utterly at sea when the author they have to "get up" is an English one. That Shakespeare, Bacon, and Milton require the use of grammar and dictionary quite as much as Æschylus, Cicero, or Corneille, is to many a new and startling revelation. To deny that a play of Shakespeare can be read through at a sitting, and thoroughly mastered in one or two more by a decently-educated Englishman, seems like an insult to his intelligence. The first object of this paper will be to disabuse him of this idea.

In order to give definiteness to this purpose, while not losing sight of the needs of candidates for the University Local Examinations, we recommend Shakespeare's *As You Like It* as a good play for our readers to study, and for us to base our suggestions upon. The student's object will be two-fold, viz. to prepare for the ordeal to which the University will subject him in due course, and also to try and add something to his knowledge, stock of ideas, and mental furniture generally, by getting behind the words of Shakespeare to the subtle, many-sided thoughts of the subtlest, most many-sided thinker that has ever pressed into his service the English, or perhaps any other language.

Now, the inability of those to whom the remarks made above refer, to see that Shakespeare requires the same kind of close study and minute research as a Greek play, is due to the tacit assumption on their part that, speaking plainly, English must be intelligible to an Englishman. If there were any doubt of the truth of this axiom, they would say that it would be dispelled by the most cursory perusal of Shakespeare's writings, for his language differs inappreciably from the language of to-day, the words he uses are almost all in common use with us, and are not the obsolete words all explained in a little glossary at the end of even a shilling edition of his plays? Now, there is a fallacy here, which is at the bottom of the mischief. It is perfectly true that Shakespeare's language differs very little from the language of to-day, though a less cursory perusal would undoubtedly bring out more points of difference; it is perfectly true that the words he uses are, with comparatively few exceptions, in common use with us; but, though in use, they are not in the *same* use. The assumption that, because a word has a certain meaning in Queen Victoria's reign, it, as a matter of course, had the same in Queen Elizabeth's, is a groundless one. It may be the case three times out of four, and fail you in the fourth; or it may never be the case; under either contingency, what becomes of the vaunted mastering of Shakespeare's meaning on the ground that his language has been yours from your cradle? The fact is, that unless a person approaches the study of Shakespeare with the consciousness—the ever-present consciousness—that the words before him may have, and as often as not do have, very different meanings from those which he is in the habit of attaching to them, he may think he has understood Shakespeare, but he is deluding himself. He may have caught the general sense of a scene, or of a particular passage, but that is hardly to have grasped the thought of Shakespeare, or to have gained what might be gained of intellectual profit by the study of him. What real grasp of Shakespeare's thought could such a student get by reading *As You Like It*, Act II. Scene 3, where Adam says:

"Why would you be so fond to overcome
The bonny priser of the humorous duke!"

or Jaques' words, in Act II. Scene 7:

"Or what is he of basest function
That says, his bravery is not on my cost?"

without troubling himself to consider what was the sense of *fond*, *humorous*, *function*, and *bravery*, in Elizabethan English?

However, the student who has read the first chapter of Peile's "Primer of Philology," which we recommended to him, will have had any delusion of this kind effectually dissipated by its perusal. But he must not think that, after he has so far been enlightened and fortified against the graver kind of philological misconceptions, he is henceforth free from all danger of misapprehending Shakespeare. It must be remembered that the amount of change from the old to the modern meaning may be considerable, or it may be comparatively slight. In the first case, the student's attention is at once arrested in his reading by finding the passage, when construed with the modern meaning, absolutely unintelligible to him, and he is naturally forced to seek for another meaning. In the second case, however, the modern meaning may not make the passage absolutely unintelligible, and so all suspicion on the part of the student that he has not caught the sense is lulled: the change is only slight, the word has only undergone a delicate shade of transition from its old to its new meaning, and yet to the thought of Shakespeare the difference may be everything, and the student misunderstands his author without knowing it.

To illustrate these two points take, first, the expression in Act I. Scene 2, where Celia says to Touchstone, "You'll be whipped for taxation." Here, owing to a change in the meaning of the word taxation, the passage is unintelligible to a modern reader. We know that Touchstone is not an M.P. who is to be urgently summoned to the House by the Conservative Whip because a division is expected on a proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to add a penny to the Income-Tax. So we search our authorities, and trace back the word to the meaning "satire," and then to "malicious satire," or "slander," which is its meaning in this passage. Again, in Act III. Scene 3, Jaques calls Touchstone "a material fool;" and here, again, we are forced to hunt for an appropriate meaning, till, through the notion of "material," as made of matter, full of matter, and by the transition of the word matter from a natural to a metaphorical sense, so as to mean "subject of thought," we find Jaques wishes to say that Touchstone is full of ideas, a man of fertile brain.

Again, the instances in this play are very numerous where a student would misunderstand Shakespeare, because, owing to the very slightness

of the change of meaning, he would be utterly unconscious that any change at all had taken place. Take, for example, that word "humorous" in the passage quoted above, and in the expression "humorous sadness," Act IV. Scene 1; to reach its meaning we shall have to dive deep into its history. Humour is from the Latin *humor*, moisture, and we must go back to the days of the infancy of medical science if we would trace the road along which this word has travelled from this meaning to the modern one. On the way we shall pass the Shakespearian meaning. According to one of the fanciful hypotheses in which the early physicists revelled, the disposition of every man was supposed to arise from the four principal humours or fluids of which his body was composed, viz. blood, phlegm, choler, and black bile. The perfect man was he whose disposition was formed by an evenly-proportioned admixture of these humours; but where one humour predominated over the others, as in the phlegmatic, choleric, or morose man, or where each humour in turn was in excess, as in the capricious man, all such were said to be humorous. In this sense Shakespeare uses the word in three passages in this play; but this is not always his meaning, for he uses the word in its natural sense of *moist* (with perhaps a play upon the two meanings of the word) in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II. Scene 1:

"Come, he hath hid himself among those trees
To be consorted with the humorous night."

Nowhere, however, does Shakespeare use the word in the modern sense, as applied to one who has a lively sense of the ludicrous side of human actions. It adds, then, considerably to the necessity of caution in reading Shakespeare that in one passage a word may be used in a sense which is now obsolete, and in another in a sense which has survived to modern times, and that, too, in the same play; for this, compare Act III. Scene 5:

"You meet in some fresh cheek the power of fancy;"

with Act IV. Scene 3:

"Chewing the food of sweet and bitter fancy;"

where fancy in the former quotation has the old meaning "love," and in the latter has the same meaning as with us viz. "imagination." But to give one more example, and a most notable one, of the unconscious misunderstanding of Shakespeare owing to the slightness of change that has taken place in the meaning of a word. Everyone, of course, is familiar with the famous speech of Jaques:

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

But is everyone quite sure they have hit Shakespeare's meaning in that expression "*merely* players"? This word "*merely*," or rather the

adjective from which it is derived, occurs again in this celebrated passage :

“ Last scene of all
That ends this strange, eventful history
Is second childishness and *mere* oblivion.”

It also occurs in five other passages in this play.

Now, it is noteworthy that the force of all these passages is greatly lost, especially that first quoted above, if we are not aware that *mere* has undergone an appreciable modification of its meaning since Shakespeare's days. The sentiment to which Jaques gives utterance takes tone, so to speak, at starting from the word “merely.” The reader with the modern sense of the word alone consciously present to his mind seems to catch a somewhat depreciatory view of human life and activity, with its many phases, episodes, and catastrophes. Life is but a play ; men and women are actors in a show or pageant, and nothing more ; just as the player is not in reality the personage whom he represents, but simply a more or less life-like imitation of him, so human beings are imitators merely—shadows, feeble reflections of realities that lie behind them and beyond them.

But Shakespeare meant to express something sensibly different from this when he put these words into Jaques' mouth, as we shall readily perceive by an examination of the meaning of “mere,” as used by Elizabethan writers. The word is derived from the Latin *merus*, and means pure, and the adverb *merè* means purely, solely. It was originally used with a word to exclude from thought everything which could not be included in that word. Thus, suppose it were open to us to predicate of a certain act, that it possessed one or other of a series of attributes graduated in strength and intensity ; in other words, that it might, we will say, be either a weakness, or a folly, or a crime, according to our way of looking at it and judging of it. Supposing our judgment of it was that it was *more* than a weakness, but *less* than a crime, we should then, using the old sense of the word, say it was *mere* folly. By so speaking we should exclude both the term that was less strong, viz. weakness, and the term that was more strong, viz. crime. Gradually, however, the word narrowed in meaning so as to exclude only one or the other, and not both, of the terms lying outside the term to which it was applied. And here arises a curious divergence, that whereas among Elizabethan writers it was always the *less* strong expression which was excluded from thought, it is just the other way with modern writers. Thus, when Shakespeare says, “All loving, mere folly,” as in this play, Act II. Scene 7, he means that love is folly, and *nothing less*, that any other description of the passion of love short of its being folly would be inadequate. Weakness and all equally *mild*

terms are excluded. On the other hand, when we moderns talk of an act as "mere folly," we intend to imply that it is folly, and *nothing more*; that that is the worst that can be said of it. Crime and all equally *strong* terms are excluded.

And now, perhaps, we are in a position accurately to gauge Shakespeare's meaning when he says that "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." Human beings are actors in life's drama—actors, and nothing *less*; no reflection here is intended upon players, as less real, less in earnest than the *dramatis personæ* they represent; no insinuation here that human beings are players and nothing *more*; and that there is, or might be, in humanity, if only Jaques did not take a desponding or cynical view of it, something beyond and above the *rôle* of players. The stage, he means to say, is in miniature a truthful and trenchant parable of life. Who more terribly in earnest than Henry Irving when playing the part of Hamlet? If he were not, could he possibly play it so effectively? There is equal earnestness with the men and women who play in the drama of life; they, too,

"Have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,

which together make a strange, eventful history.

From what has been said thus far, it must be obvious to the student that the study of Shakespeare is not the easy thing he may have been led to suppose. For, before he can attempt that wider portion of his subject, which consists in the critical study of the play as a life-like representation of the intricate workings of human foibles, caprices, and passions; before he can set himself to investigate the data of the many psychological problems which Shakespeare has proposed for himself, and has worked out with such transcending genius and acumen—there is seen to be a great deal of labour and thought necessary to arrive at the true meaning of his words. But the reward for this intellectual effort is of itself great. By noting carefully the treatment of words as they have been manipulated by each generation of thinkers and handed on to the next, to receive the impress of fresh modes of thoughts at every stage of their journey; by seeing how little "humorous" language is, but how each step of its gradual metamorphosis follows a well-defined track, we obtain the key to the mental processes to which we ourselves have all along been unconsciously subject, and the laws of thought thus revealed to us give us increased power of discrimination in our judgment of human action, and thus make us greater proficient in the solution of the complex problems which present themselves in the course of our experience. Besides those we have commented upon, the following words (and the list might be greatly extended) which occur in *As You*

Like It will well repay an exhaustive study of their meanings : emulator, remorse, civil, religious, nice, censure, still, presently, conversed (see use of the word in true Shakespearian sense in the heading to the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles), favour (see Gen. xli. 3), inquisition (see Deut. xix. 18), observance (see Mark vi. 28), argument, foulness, gracious, disable, new-fangled, conceit, purlieu. In all cases the student is advised to go first to the etymology of the word, and here he will find his Chambers' Dictionary, which was recommended to him, a most trustworthy guide. With this, and the notes to the play in the Clarendon Press Series Edition, and by carefully comparing the parallel passages from other plays and other Elizabethan writers, he will be able to trace for himself the gradations of meaning, and will find the process an excellent intellectual exercise. If he takes an interest in etymology and comparative philology generally, he can add to his researches in this direction by investigating the derivations of words, even where their meaning is obvious, and with no ulterior object beyond the pleasure that the investigation affords. There are many words in the play, such as churlish, to cater, carlot, anatomise, curtle-axe, rumination, &c. which have their own tale to tell. To take an instance just to show how large a field is open to the student in this direction, let us select the word "curtle-axe" (Act I. Scene 3). This word is a corruption of "cutlas," a word which has come to us through the French from the Latin *cutellus*, the diminutive of *culter*, a knife or coulter (1 Sam. xiii. 20) ; but it is a corruption of a very curious kind, and illustrates a trick or habit of language which is worth noting. When a foreign word comes into a language, it is looked coldly or shyly upon by the large majority of people to whom it is presented—it is unintelligible to them, and, more than all, it may be difficult of pronunciation. Under these circumstances it will have but a cold welcome, and runs imminent risk of being dismissed altogether back to the quarter from which it came. The chances of obtaining domicile in a strange land depend, in fact, very largely upon the facility with which it lends itself to an assimilation, in sound or in look, in its final syllable at least, to words of home growth. You may say that its survival in the language into which it has been imported very much depends upon its chance power of adaptability to assume the form, or sound, or both, of some actual word which more or less suggests to the unlettered who use it the idea conveyed by the word. Thus, *chaussée*, a raised way, has survived under the corrupted form *causeway*, and survived too, because its final syllable lent itself readily to the English word "way," which belongs not to the word, but to the idea. So *écrevisse* has become *crayfish*, and *appendis*, which means nothing more than an appendage, has become *pent-house*.

This survival of a word, through a capacity of mimicking the aspects of

its surroundings, is very analogous to that property which Darwin has noticed as distinguishing certain species of insects, which owe their survival from the ravages of their natural enemies to the fact of their successful imitation of, or assimilation to, the colour of the leaves or bark upon which they feed; while other species, which have not developed this power of "protective mimicry," as he terms it, have been elbowed out in the struggle for existence. There is, then, a kind of protective mimicry in words; and "curtle-axe" is another such survival through the assimilation of the sound of the French word *coutelas* to the English curtle-axe, that is, an axe for the curtle, kirtle, or girdle, that being the idea which was suggested to an Englishman by the sight of the thing itself, his imagination being assisted to the idea by the *sound* of its foreign name. Among a number of other words coming under this category we may cite: isinglass, dormouse, field-fare, beef-eater, jolly-boat, bed-ridden, belfry, periwig, icicle, country-dance, and Jerusalem (in connection with artichokes).

We will now lay down for the guidance of students a general outline of the plan to pursue in preparing a play of Shakespeare, such as *As You Like It*, for examination.

(1) From the information given in the introduction to the play in the Clarendon Press Series Edition, note the sources from which the plot is derived, and the probable date at which it was written, and from a good biography of Shakespeare make yourself acquainted with the domestic and professional history of the author at and about this date. This is especially necessary in this particular play, because the bitterness of the melancholy Jaques is supposed to be a reflection of the poet's own mind, at a time when a deep dejection was settling down upon it, owing to his father's bankruptcy and other domestic troubles. Here he seems to fight the battle out with his own weakness, and to win back that self-mastery and patience which threatened to desert him altogether, as they had deserted Jaques. Another point of interest is to be found in the old tradition that Shakespeare himself acted in this play, and that his favourite part was that of the faithful old steward, Adam.

(2) Read the play through from beginning to end, sufficiently slowly to grasp the general plot of the play, but without pausing to work out knotty and intricate points, which you can mark with a view to further investigation.

(3) Write from memory, with due regard to style, and partly as an exercise in composition, all you can recollect of the plot.

(4) Compare what you have written with the play itself, correct and supply deficiencies, and then put it on one side for another and final revision when the play has been completely studied.

(5) If you are familiar with any other of Shakespeare's plays, and know

anything of the differences between the various schools of dramatic art (for this read Stopford Brooke's "Primer of English Literature") test this play by the rules of that art. Does it belong to the classical or romantic school? Does it preserve the unities? Note that the plot, in the hands of Shakespeare, is not a simple one, but is developed by the interweaving of two subsidiary plots with the main one. The ducal group, at the court and in the forest, is sufficient for a classical drama; but two other groups of characters, the sons of Sir Rowland de Bois, one, and the other, Silvius and Phebe, go to make up the *dénouement*. There is also the bye-play of Touchstone and Audrey. The plot is worked out by a woman disguised as a man. Note Shakespeare's fondness for this artifice—Julia, Viola, Portia. Why? The prevalent custom in Shakespeare's day—universal till after the Restoration—for women's parts to be taken by boys, lent itself so readily and naturally to this. Compare the main plot with the *Tempest*,—in both, an exiled and a usurping duke, in both, mythological divinities introduced, such as Hymen, Ceres, &c.

(6) Now begin a precise and minute study of the play; do not be content with just working up the notes and looking out parallel passages, but make yourself master of the thought that lies behind every word and sentence of the play. Bear carefully in mind all that has been said in the early part of this paper as to the danger of misunderstanding your author through unconsciousness of the less obtrusive changes of meaning and construction since Shakespeare's time. More difficult passages,—such as the wit-combat between Rosalind and Celia (Act I. Scene 2), as to the office of Fortune and Nature, the thought of which is further involved by the entrance of Touchstone the witless, the "natural," and by the consequent play upon words; or, again, the passage in Act II. Scene 7, commencing "Why, who cries out on pride?"—these should be paraphrased, *i.e.* each passage should be expanded, broken up into short sentences, in prose, and written out free from all ellipses of thought or construction. There are other passages scattered here and there in the play which require extensive reading and knowledge in other directions to be thoroughly appreciated. For instance, Shakespeare has introduced the parson into other plays, but only in this does he hold him up to ridicule,—even in his name; "Mar-text," is decidedly severe. Why is this? Celia's remark, Act I. Scene 2, line 80, and a passage in *Hamlet*, point to a recent "inhibition of the players" within the precincts of the City of London. The mayor and aldermen of London were at this time strongly tinged with Puritanism, which vented itself against poetry and the drama to the extent of inhibiting all stage plays within their jurisdiction. Shakespeare's theatre was at Blackfriars. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ*. Again, take such a passage as that where Touch-

stone says to his extremely rustic and simple-minded mistress Audrey, "I am here with thee and thy goats, as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was amongst the Goths." Even after the double play upon words has been realised, from the knowledge that capricious is from the Latin *capere* a goat, and that Goths is pronounced exactly like goats, it is almost necessary to have read the "Tristia" of Ovid to appreciate the full force of this allusion. Yet it is vital to the understanding of the play. Ovid the courtier, the poet, the refined—the over-refined—writer of amatory verses and soft elegies, in the most luxurious times of the Roman Empire, finds himself in his old age banished by the emperor he had offended to the farthest confines of that empire, to the country of the Getæ, on the wintry shores of the Black Sea. "To one like Ovid, accustomed from his youth to all the luxury of Rome, and so ardent a lover of politeness and refinement, painful indeed must have been the contrast presented by his new abode, which offered him an inhospitable soil, a climate so severe as to freeze even the wine, and the society of a horde of semi-barbarians, to whose language he was a stranger." Touchstone is drawing a comparison between himself and Ovid—a comparison not complimentary to Audrey, if she could have divined the drift of it. Touchstone, like Ovid, transplanted from the court—the hot-house, where such as he grow so luxuriantly—to the ruder out-door climate of the forest of Arden, feels the change, and bemoans himself accordingly (compare the scene between Corin and Touchstone, Act III. Scene 1).

(7) Collect all allusions which will illustrate English manners and customs, old proverbs used by Shakespeare, his own sayings which have become proverbial, allusions to ancient myths and legends, of Atalanta, Helen, Leander, &c. historical personages, Cleopatra, &c.

(8) Lastly, with mind thus furnished, and memory saturated, so to speak, with the contents of the play (Act II. Scenes 1, 3, and 7, and the lyrical pieces should certainly be learnt by heart), proceed to analyse the prominent characters: compare Touchstone with the other fools of Shakespeare, if your reading is sufficiently wide to make this possible: above all, study the character of Jaques; compare his behaviour in exile with that of the senior Duke, how this one finds contentment in the forest, though exiled and wronged, while the other is "compact of jars;" the one feeling the quiet life of nature to be a school in which to learn that—

"Sweet are the uses of adversity,"

the other finding there only an aggravation of a cynical bitterness, the fruit of a mind and body debauched in early years. In order to see that Shakespeare meant to teach that happiness is a subjective faculty independent of surrounding objects, by thus pourtraying Jaques, and

showing how completely he had failed to attain to that condition, notice how he is treated by all the best types of character in the play, by Duke Senior, in Act II. Scene 7; by Orlando in Act III. Scene 2, line 260, by Rosalind in Act IV. Scene 1.

And when you have spent some hours of thought in this analysis, try and get a sight of some of the meditations of other thinkers upon the great masterpieces of Shakespeare—Schlegel in his *Dramatic Literature*; Coleridge, in his *Essays on Shakespeare and Milton* (*Biographia Literaria*); Cowden Clarke, for the minor characters; and, above all, if you can possibly manage it, procure a copy of the new translation (just published) in one volume of Gervinus' *Shakespeare Commentaries*. Of this work, it will be sufficient to quote what Mr. Furnivall, one of the ablest of contemporary Shakespearian scholars, has said: "The profound and generous *Commentaries* of Gervinus—an honour to a German to have written, a pleasure to an Englishman to read—is still the only book known to me that comes near the true treatment and the dignity of its subject, or can be put into the hands of the student who wants to know the mind of Shakespeare."

THE HOLY WAR.*

"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."—HEBREWS xii. 4.

THESE words might well be regarded as the culminating point in the argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews. That Epistle, of which a characteristic portion is appointed for the Epistle of this day, is equally remarkable for two things: for the richness and depth of its dogmatic interpretation of the Scriptures, and for the earnestness with which such interpretations are subordinated to the main purpose of sustaining those to whom it is addressed in the warfare of their Christian life. To no part of the New Testament are we more indebted for distinct declarations of the union of divinity and humanity in our Lord Jesus Christ, or for the interpretation of His priestly office in the great sacrifice commemorated this week. But intimately as the Epistle is associated in Christian thought with these great verities of the faith, the explanation of them occupies, even in point of space, the smaller portion of the Epistle; and, in point of argument, they are subservient to the purpose of the exhortation which constitutes the main scope of the writer. If he commences by declaring that God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, who is the brightness of His glory and the

* A sermon by the Rev. Henry Wace, M.A., preached in Westminster Abbey, Wednesday before Easter, April 12th, 1876. Inserted by permission.

express image of His Person, it is in order to point the warning : "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard ; for how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord ?" If the writer dwells on the merciful condescension which accepted the nature and the sufferings of flesh and blood, it is in order to renew the old appeal, "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, to-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." If the perfect Priesthood of Christ is demonstrated, it is with a view to the exhortation, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed unto the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Again and again, after intervals of expository argument, does the writer renew this appeal, until it culminates in that grand recital of the warfare and the victories of faith, which occupies the chapter immediately preceding the text. At length, pointing to the last and greatest of this cloud of martyrs, he exhorts us to "look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame. For consider," he concludes, "Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."

It is in harmony with this earnest purpose that while the writer is conspicuous, as has been said, for his exposition of the nature and the work of Christ, he is not less conspicuous for the ardour with which he dwells on our Lord's complete sympathy with us, and on our consequent capacity to follow Him in the character and purpose of His work. He is described as one with His people in their nature, one in their temptations, one in their sufferings, and one with them in their death ; and the text answers to the declaration at the opening of the Epistle, that "it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one ; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." It becomes, therefore, alike our duty and our privilege, in meditating on the sufferings and the sacrifice of this week, to see in them, august as they are, our own example, and to bear in mind that we shall not have applied them to their full purpose unless, in our place and degree, we in our own lives enter into their spirit, and become partakers of a like experience. If in all things "it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren," in all things, would the Apostolic writer teach us, does it behove His brethren to be made like unto Him.

Accordingly, in the appeal, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin," we have the exposition of the ultimate law of a Christian or of a godly life. It consists in striving against sin, and it involves

resistance unto death. Such is, beyond question, a comprehensive description of the life and death of Christ. In His royal no less than in His priestly functions, He came to save His people from their sins, and throughout His life every word and deed was directed against some habit or act of sin. He Himself, though, as we are assured in this Epistle, assailed by temptation, was assailed in vain, and, except at its commencement and its close, His strife was against sin in others. Wherever and in whomsoever He discerned moral or spiritual evil, he attacked it with those words which were sharper than any two-edged sword, which pierced to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and which discerned the thoughts and intents of the heart. Whoever approached Him was sensible of this flaming sword, which turned every way, and no harness was so close or so strong as to resist its burning penetration. The intense antagonism He aroused was due to the fact that this terrible weapon was perpetually piercing the hearts of all around Him, and inflicting wounds which rankled bitterly, unless they were submitted to His gracious discipline of repentance and love. It was a life-long warfare, in which those who submitted to His authority were pardoned and endued with a new life, but which pursued with relentless severity those who obstinately resisted. But it was also a warfare which was pursued at the cost of all warfare—that of blood. The moment came when the battle reached its crisis, and the Captain of our salvation had to resolve whether he would yield in the struggle, or sacrifice His life. That it was no light alternative even to Him, the record of His agony in the garden shows. Even apart from His spiritual distress, we cannot doubt that that exquisite nature “tasted death”—in the language of this Epistle—and the agony and shame of death with a bitterness far beyond His brethren; and, as He Himself declared, then was the hour and power of darkness, and the moment when the Spirit of evil finally assaulted His own soul. But He endured to the death; He shed His blood; and by the shedding of blood that victory, like other victories, was gained. Manifold as are the spiritual aspects of that sacrifice, this is the description of its actual history—He resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Such also, my brethren, has been the history of His followers, so far as they have been true to His leadership, and so far as they have carried forward His victory. From the moment when He rose from the dead and assured them of His triumph, the Christian Church, headed by His Apostles, organised a warfare against sin. They formed themselves into a perpetual society having this seal, “The Lord knoweth them that are His; and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” St. Peter opened that long war on the Day of Pentecost, in words which, like those of His Lord, pricked his hearers to the heart,

exhorting them "to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Some seventy years afterwards the veil is lifted, by the hand of a Roman statesman, from the comparative obscurity of the Christian Church, and discloses an army of soldiers of the Cross, whose bond of union is still stamped conspicuously with the Apostolic seal. At the commencement of the present century Pliny reports to Trajan, as the result of what he could extort from the Christians of his province, "that this was the sum of their fault or error: that they were wont to meet on a stated day before daylight, and sing a hymn to Christ as God, and bind themselves by a 'sacramentum' "—an oath like that of a Roman soldier—not, as Pliny had expected, to some crime, but "that they would not commit theft, or robbery, or adultery, that they would not break faith, nor repudiate a trust"—a memorable record, honourable to the Roman, to whose impartial accuracy it is due, as well as to the Church, whose clear and simple character it reflects, and more precious alike in its historical and in its practical instruction than many a famous volume. Under this standard, and bound by this oath, the army of the saints maintained their stern, though patient, war against the sin which was embodied in the life and in the very institutions of the society of their day. They won at length a great victory, though one which was not, alas! like that of their Master, unmarred in its use of the hour of victory. The victory, in fact, was imperfect, but an immense victory it was; and it was won, like that of their Lord, by resistance unto blood. That which has been described as "the strong antipathy of good to bad" aroused the equally strong antipathy of bad to good; a corrupt society felt instinctively that a Church which was at war with iniquity was at war with itself, and it appealed to the final arbitrament of bloodshed. The Christian weapons were not carnal, and the soldiers of the Cross, in those days of the Church's purity, were content to suffer death without ever inflicting it. But they, like their Lord, had to answer the question whether, in the spirit of true soldiers, they would die rather than be false to their duty. This was the ultimate test by which their cause was put to the proof; and not till it had been demonstrated, by the sacrifice of thousands of lives and the shedding of blood in innumerable torments, that there was no limit to the Christian resistance against sin—not until then did the world acknowledge itself overcome.

In subsequent centuries, my brethren, the battle has been more chequered, though no impartial observer of history will doubt that the victory of good over evil, of righteousness over sin, has been continually advancing. But wherever it has advanced it has been, in the words of this Epistle, "not without blood." The cause cannot be named, neither that of purity in religion, nor that of justice in government, nor that of

freedom to the slave, nor that of the right of scientific inquiry, in which blood has not been shed—sometimes, alas! in sufferings inflicted by the visible Church on those who belonged to the Church invisible. But everywhere, and in all ages, no victory over sin has been finally secured, no remission of its curse has been complete, without this shedding of blood. It has been shed, indeed, in a thousand confused struggles, where right and wrong, truth and error, were grappling with each other in an inextricable *mêlée*; but amidst all their blindness and all their selfishness men have ever believed, and have never ceased to maintain, that it was the cause of right or of truth which they were putting to this terrible arbitrament. And though it may be vain to look for a time when this stern law will in the present world be abrogated, we may at least believe, and confidently pray, that the issues between right and wrong, truth and falsehood, will daily become more clearly defined, and that in an increasing degree resistance unto blood will be identified with resistance against sin. But that which we are more immediately concerned to observe is, that in the strife of individuals against sin, in the personal struggles of saints, reformers, missionaries, or inquirers, nay, of humble Christians, like most of the early martyrs, victory has only been gained by the voluntary sacrifice of life. The sacrifice, indeed, has not been extorted from all who may claim the honour of belonging to that sacred army, any more than it is demanded of every soldier that he should die on the field of battle. But the determination to accept death rather than defeat, and the acceptance of this test wherever it has been exacted, have been the essential conditions of victory. And, as the sacred writer exclaims, “What shall I more say?” for the time would fail me to tell of all, judges, kings, prophets, priests, or holy men and women—of all, whether before the coming of Christ or after it, nay, whether consciously Christians or not—who, in the faith of things hoped for, resting on the substance of things not seen, refused to accept deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, of bonds and of imprisonments; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they were destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. In short, resistance unto blood, by individuals no less than by nations, by saints no less than by soldiers, by women no less than by men—such was the cost by which our present inheritance of all that is good, true, and beautiful was won; such is the tenure by which we hold it now. This, my brethren, is “the holy war.”

The text which has suggested these considerations supplies their application. If the Apostolic writer, in addressing Hebrew Christians, who, as he says, had endured a great fight of afflictions, could exclaim,

"Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin," the same exclamation may certainly be applied to ourselves. There may, indeed, be some among us whose resistance has not fallen short of this test; we have had to mourn the loss of bishops and missionaries, statesmen and soldiers, who have sacrificed their lives with as single a devotion to the cause of righteousness as the saints of old time, and similar sacrifices are no doubt being constantly made. Even in more private careers, there are men who sacrifice health and peace, and, if not life itself, all the ends for which this worldly life is ordinarily valued, in devotion to their duty; and there are patient women who, in their yearning for the true welfare of those they love, endure secret struggles, often far more bitter than a speedy death. But taking the Christian world as a whole, we must freely admit that we have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. It may appear as if such a sacrifice were never likely to be demanded of us; though it would be rash, even in the present day, to overlook the possibility. But in a time of comparative security it is our danger to forget the stern nature of the contest in which, as Christians, we are sworn combatants. In all armies discipline is apt to become lax in the time of peace, and the Christian army is no exception to the rule. But our error lies in supposing that in this holy war there is or can be any time of peace. All around us, in public and social injustices, in the acknowledged and lamented vices of society, and, above all, in the weaknesses, the pollutions, and the falsehoods of our own hearts, similar issues are raised, and similar enemies are to be encountered, to those which cost our Lord and His immediate followers such a bitter struggle. They have never yet been attacked in earnest by the true spirit of Christian righteousness without exhibiting a proportionate resistance, and if we are not sensible of any such struggle, it is to be feared we are faltering in the strife. But at all events, as we realise the deadly nature of this struggle with sin, as we think of the blood that has been shed in it, from that precious blood to which we do homage this week, to the outpouring of the life of innumerable humbler souls, who can fail to feel roused and shamed into a sterner struggle against any evil of which he may be conscious—first in himself, and secondly in others? A temptation seems from time to time to prevail as though there were something tame and comparatively inglorious in simple efforts to be good and true, and to spread goodness and truth around us; and distinction is sought and obtained in contests more exciting, and attracting, as a rule, more attention from the world. But, as a matter of fact, in every word spoken, or deed done, or thought controlled, in the cause of righteousness and truth, we are taking part in that which, from the first dawn of morality to the present hour, has been nothing less than a holy war, a war, of which the critical struggle was fought on Calvary, and in which

the most precious blood has been shed that the world has ever known. If we are not called on for similar sacrifices, if we in any respect enjoy the peace won in that war without bearing its severest burdens, the more ashamed ought we to be to fail in fulfilling our modest and comparatively easy duty. What would be thought of a soldier who, because the main battle had been won in another part of the field, was content to abandon his post to the forces immediately in front of him, and to leave his braver comrades to complete their victory by themselves? Some similar indignation should surely stir our hearts against our own selves when, looking, as we do this week, unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, we hear the appeal of the sacred writer: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."



CHURCH ADMINISTRATION.

III.—CHURCH MEMBERSHIP. CHURCH MEETINGS.

IN the very first stage of Christianity, those who, under the teaching of the Apostles, were brought into that condition of mind and heart, to which they aimed to bring all their hearers, by inculcating "repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," joined themselves to the few disciples who then constituted "the Church,"—the Christian company that recognised the Messiahship of Jesus,—the hundred and twenty who originally met in the upper room at Jerusalem, and "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers; . . . and the Lord added to the Church daily." So now, those who, under the preaching of the Gospel, are awakened, enlightened, convinced, converted, seek the society of the professing people of God, and with earnestness and eagerness cry, "We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." Not only the timid, but the courageous and the strong find it to be well for them, and a powerful help in the maintenance of their piety and profession, to press, with a holy persistence, their appeal for spiritual companionship with those who are "on their way to the land of Judah; having heard that the Lord had visited His people, in giving them bread." Like Ruth their cry is, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

This resolve is in obedience to the Divine command to confess Christ before men; and testifies to their having broken off from the service of the god of this world to enter upon that of the Lord Jesus.

A social instinct, as well as a religious duty, is here acknowledged and followed; and the advantages of such association and communion with the excellent of the earth are indisputably proved to be great. Thus Church membership is one of the recognised institutions of every religious community that professes an adherence to the commands of Christ; and the duty and privilege of entering upon it should occupy a prominent place among the exhortations of the pulpit—carefully guarding against the possible danger of attaching undue importance to such fellowship, as if it necessarily insured stability of character; and as if a name on the Church roll carried along with it an indefeasible title to an inalienable inheritance.

Applications for membership are generally made in the first instance to the minister, who will, as the spiritual instructor of the people, be naturally sought by candidates, for the purpose of expressing their desire of uniting themselves with those over whose religious welfare he has been called to watch. His province and privilege will be to converse with such welcome visitants; and to institute an examination—kindly and gently, yet faithfully conducted—by means of which he will ascertain the state of heart and amount of intelligence possessed by the applicants.

These candidates will be named by him to the deacons, and one or more of their number appointed to confer with them upon the subject, during the interval between one Church meeting and another.

There is amongst us some diversity, as to the mode of action to be adopted, with respect to such as seek to enter into fellowship; some Churches leaving the matter of examination entirely with the minister, and some receiving the application by letter, without any such interview with either pastor or deacons,—a mode of proceeding that can hardly be recommended for adoption with safety. But no hard-and-fast line can be laid down relative either to the form of application or reception. There may be some so well-known to the Church and its officers as men and women eminent for godliness and consistency of conduct, that it may appear an unnecessary formality, which has nothing to recommend it, except a deference to red-tapeism, to insist upon a rigid theological examination, or the ordinary delay of a month, or even a longer time, previous to reception.

What is demanded for the health and purity and safety of any Church is, that the evidences of piety and spiritual intelligence shall be unequivocal and unmistakable. That which would have satisfied in Apostolic days ought to satisfy us now. We know that a hearty reception of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and the Saviour of men—the only foundation on which the heart was reposing all its hopes of acceptance with the Father—did suffice, in those early times, to ensure a loving welcome to those who avowed that they had first given themselves to

the Lord, and desired to give themselves to the brethren "by the will of God." These were designated by the Apostle as "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints; with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours." To everyone of those among ourselves, concerning whom these words can be used, we dare not do otherwise than say, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?"

In holding such conferences as are deemed right and wise, in order to ascertain the religious knowledge and experience of female candidates, the appointment of one who should act the part of a deaconess—whether the office be distinctly recognised, and the name borne or not—might often be a happy arrangement; one who, with the tact and delicacy of her sex, would know better, perhaps, how to ascertain the real state of mind of a timid sister, than the most skilful dissector of the heart among ministers or deacons.

In conveying to the Church such information concerning the spiritual views and experience and Christian character of candidates, as may be satisfactory to those who are asked to receive them into fellowship, and who have a right to be satisfied on these particulars, regard should be had to what is due to the natural desire of every shrinking mind to keep sacred to itself, or to confine to but a few, the inner workings of its own spirit. There is no need, and there ought to be no attempt made, to minister to the craving of a mere curiosity, by a public and detailed account of the spiritual processes that have gone on in any soul. It should be enough to ensure admission to Church membership, for ministers and deacons to be certified of the sincerity and intelligent piety of any applicant, and to state generally the merits of each case. Sometimes, however, so striking are certain special facts, so illustrative and confirmatory of the wondrous power and grace of God, that it is well for all parties there should be a distinct reference to them, in order that a divine work may be devoutly recognised, and God be glorified. Common sense and prudent judgment will decide on the wisdom or unwisdom of such representations.

An insistence upon the observance of a uniform course of action in the formal admission to a Church, ought not to be required from everyone. There are some whose sensitive natures, and such are to be found even among the sterner sex, might make them shrink from all publicity, who, not because they were ashamed of Christ, or His Gospel, or His people, might yet hesitate—in any form that involved a personal presentation of themselves—to appear before the Church, in order to give expression to the fact of their belief of the truth, and their desire for communion with the people of God. Their presence at the Lord's table "in the midst of the courts of the Lord's house," should be

accepted as their public avowal of having entered upon His service; while the announcement of their names, as newly-received members, to which no one for a moment could with propriety object, would be a sufficient proclamation of their having identified themselves with that particular portion of the professing Church with which they worshipped.

The previous remarks naturally lead to some observations relating to *Church Meetings*. As the name implies, these are for business purposes connected with the Church, such as the proposal or reception of candidates, who desire association with those already in fellowship; the reception of reports of the working of the various institutions affiliated with the Church, and of which it ought to be well informed; and the consideration of matters that may involve the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline, which at times (happily the occasions are rare) require the attention of pastor and people; and such other business as properly comes within the cognizance of members who have a right to be asked to give their sanction to certain proposed courses of action, in which the characters and usefulness of the Church may be involved.

At these gatherings the recorded transactions of the previous meeting will be read and put for confirmation;* and such cases of candidature as have been delegated to any of the officers, for inquiry and consideration, will be laid before those present, and their vote taken upon them.

Generally these meetings are held in the week immediately preceding the first Sunday in the month, which in our English Free Churches is usually the Sacramental Sabbath. Sometimes another night than that on which the ordinary service is held is selected, though to avoid the undue multiplication of public gatherings, which is often a cause of the smallness of attendance, it is frequently held after the usual week-night prayer-meeting or lecture. If the business is not lengthened, this may be done without making too great demands on the time of the members, especially if the ordinary service be somewhat curtailed; or, what is better still, if on this occasion it be made to form a special devotional exercise, preparatory to the entrance upon the consideration of Church affairs.†

Even if there be no business transactions requiring the attention of members, these meetings ought to be held, not for the purpose of keeping up a mere routine, but because the special relationship which Christians maintain in a fellowship with each other, distinct from their relationship to the general congregation, should be kept continually

* In some Churches the Church minutes are read and confirmed at the deacons' meeting.—ED.

† For myself, I think that the ordinary Church meeting is of such importance that a special evening ought always to be given to it.—ED.

before them. It serves to recall them to a sense of specific obligation, of which many antagonistic circumstances around them are calculated to make them oblivious. There is often great need to have the mind stirred up "by way of remembrance."

But there is scarcely a minister amongst us who has not to deplore the paucity of the numbers found at these monthly meetings. The worshippers at the ordinary week-night service are few enough, yet those at the assemblies of the Church are fewer still, whichever evening be selected for them. The usual week-night engagements are often attended by those who are not in membership, and who consequently retire when the business of the Church commences. At least, that is the usual custom; unless, as is the case in some congregations, the service for the reception of members is not confined exclusively to those who are in fellowship,—a course, the propriety of which, while it has some things to recommend it, may admit of a little questioning.

When we reflect how often these gatherings have been the occasion of the most hallowed impressions,—from the statements made, concerning the candidates for Church membership, of the way in which God has led them; sometimes, as has already been hinted, embodying most striking incidents, which, with all needed delicacy may be detailed to those who are presumed to be interested in such proofs of the presence and operations of the Spirit of Truth,—it is not easy to feel other than regret that more are not present to share in the hallowed joy then diffused; to feel the fresh spiritual impulse communicated to the Church, and to be borne forward on the rising wave of divine influence, which has been evidently setting in. It argues a very small amount of interest in the progress of the cause of God, with which in particular they are associated, and in the advancement of religion generally, when persons will not take the trouble to devote one hour in a month, to hear what great things God has done for them. The fire of spiritual life must be burning very low, and its flame grown very dim, when only a score or two, out of a Church of two or three hundred, are all that can be persuaded to leave their home, their business, or perhaps their pleasure, to be present on these occasions. If the heart were properly warm and zealous in the cause of God, it would not be content with receiving at second or third hand these inspiring tidings.

If Paul's representation of a Church as a *body* be correct, what shall be thought of those members which are neither affected for good or evil, joy or sorrow, by the condition of the others; and whose only public exhibition of their belief in the oneness of the Church, and of their relationship to it, is at the Lord's Supper? Can there be a vital union of any one member with the rest of the body, if it do not in any way thrill responsively to what affects the whole?

T. W. AVELING.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

JUNE 3.—“*He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.*”—Isaiah liii. 7.

THIS verse should be read in connection with the morning lesson for the day, published in the list of Sunday-school Lessons (Matt. xxvii. 11—25), and of which it proves an appropriate summary. After the trial and condemnation of our Lord by Caiphas and the Sanhedrin, He was led away to the Procurator or Roman Governor of Judæa, Pontius Pilate, to be tried over again. The reason for this procedure appears to have been that the Jewish Sanhedrin at this time had no power to inflict, although they might pronounce, the punishment of death on criminals; and Christ was therefore arraigned before Pilate to procure Pilate's authority to carry out the capital sentence which had already been pronounced upon Him. It does not, however, appear that Jesus was entirely silent before Pilate, for to Pilate's first question, which was founded on the formal accusation that had been laid against Jesus (Luke xxiii 2), “Art Thou the King of the Jews?” our Lord answered just as He had answered the High Priest under similar circumstances, “Thou sayest” (compare Mark xiv. 62, with Matt. xvi. 64); and in the Gospel of St. John we find this was followed by those memorable words concerning the true nature of Christ's kingdom which so awed even the Roman Procurator that he went out to the Jews and declared, “I find in Him no fault at all.” But this declaration of Pilate only served to enrage the chief priests and elders. With fresh vehemence and passion they began “to accuse Him of many things,” among others of “stirring up the people,” that is, of inciting them to rebellion against the authority of Rome, and of “teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place” (Luke xxiii. 5). Before this furious and malignant storm of accusation Jesus stood silent: “He answered nothing.” Pilate was so confounded at the majestic dignity with which Christ refused even to reply to the passionate cries of His accusers, that

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition; these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

he asks him in wonder, "Hearest Thou not how many things they witness against Thee?" "Answerest Thou nothing?" (Mark xv. 4). But to Pilate, as to the Jews, Jesus now deigns no reply: "He answered him to never a word;" and this silence of Christ, a silence far more impressive than speech, made so deep an impression on Pilate's mind, that from that moment he began a vain but sincere struggle with the Jews to release Him,—a struggle which ended in Pilate's defeat, but which served to bring out more and more plainly his conviction of the innocence, and of more than the innocence, of Jesus. Such is the history to which this Golden Text is prefixed, and an additional interest attaches to it from its having been the very text which the Ethiopian eunuch was reading aloud in his chariot when Philip met him (Acts viii. 32), and whose meaning Philip explained by telling him this same story of the sufferings and silence of Jesus: "He began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts viii. 32).

Another and even more pathetic illustration of this verse in Isaiah, and the completest fulfilment of the prophecy, will be found a little further on in the Gospel history. After Jesus had been delivered to be crucified, and had been led away into the common hall, the soldiers commenced a series of insults and of torture, which even now make our blood run cold as we read of them. After they had scourged Jesus, and whilst he was still in agony from the horrible cruelty of the punishment, they go through the taunting ceremony of a mock coronation of Jesus. Twining a crown of thorns round His head, each thorn tearing the flesh as it was pressed into the brow, they clothe him with a "scarlet robe," probably some faded military garment that had been cast off, and then putting into His hands a reed, as if it were a sceptre, they kneel before Him in pretended homage, crying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And then, as if unable to find words bitter enough to express their scorn and hatred, they snatch the reed from His hand, and smite Him on the head with it, spitting, as they do so, into His gentle and loving face. All this scorn and indignity, and suffering and cruel shame, Jesus bears in silence; not one word of reproach, or protest, or anger escapes His lips; but, as Isaiah predicted of Him, "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth."

Perhaps the best way to feel the Divine dignity and greatness of our Lord's silence, both here and before Pilate, is to contrast it with the conduct of one of His holiest and most devoted servants on a very similar occasion. When Paul was accused before the Sanhedrin—and many of the men who were then sitting in judgment upon Paul had seen the Master Himself standing before that same tribunal—and had boldly declared his

own consciousness of innocence, Ananias, the High Priest, commanded some of those who were standing near the Apostle to smite him on his mouth. In a moment the human passion of the man flashed out, and he retorted on the High Priest, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" It was a natural, an excusable outburst of indignation, but how much does it say, both for Christ and for Paul, when we say it was not like Christ. He bore far greater indignity and shame without a murmur; His silence in suffering was as divine as His speech in life had been.

It is things like these in the character and conduct of Jesus which make us feel it is impossible to compare even the saintliest of His disciples with Him, and that, however great might have been the spiritual elevation St. Paul had reached, it fell infinitely below the superhuman elevation of the character of Jesus, and that nothing can explain a life so transcendently above the very highest and noblest of human lives, but the words, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."

But it is the continual wonder of the character of Jesus that though it is so unlike any human character, so far above the highest elevation to which we can attain, yet the contemplation of Christ never disheartens nor discourages us in our endeavour to imitate Him. Some ideals crush all achievement by their very remoteness and elevation; but here is confessedly the highest moral ideal the world has ever seen, and yet to look at it, to linger over it, to ponder it again and again, until we see new wonder and beauty in it, is not to quench all effort to grow like it, but to inspire us with new desire "to follow Him." The greatness of Christ's example is not its only marvel, but that with its greatness we should feel it is an example for us, one we can follow and make our own, is a greater wonder still. "He left us an example that we should follow in His steps;" and those who follow Him most nearly at once see most of the unutterable loveliness and grandeur of His character, and grow likest to it.

There are very few of us to whom that single aspect of the character of Christ which is portrayed in our Golden Text, His bearing injustice and malignity and false accusation with silence, will not teach a lesson we need to learn. We are so quick to resent injury; so ready to denounce malice, especially when it is directed against ourselves; so vehement in our indignation when we are unjustly accused, that our very indignation may sometimes lead us into sin in defending right against wrong. It is not easy to be silent when the words of passionate protest against iniquity are burning on our tongue, or when we are made to "suffer for righteousness' sake." But there are times

when we follow our Lord most closely, and serve His cause best, by quietly and meekly bearing injustice without a word. And nothing will so help us thus to suffer and be silent as the remembrance of Him who "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously," and the righteousness of whose cause all the years that have gone by since He suffered have only served to vindicate.

JUNE 10.—"*For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*"—2 Cor.

V. 21.

This is a very bold and startling verse. It is certain that if an inspired Apostle had not written it, no Christian theologian would ever have dared to have said of the Lord Jesus that "He was made sin for us." And even when we read these words we instinctively endeavour to soften their meaning. We say they mean Christ was made "a sin-offering" for us, or that He "bore the punishment for our sin," or that He "suffered, as if He were a sinner," for we are glad to find any way of avoiding the strong expression of the Apostle, "He hath made Him to be sin for us." Still this is what St. Paul did say, and it remains for us, reverently and thoughtfully, to endeavour to discover their meaning.

There are three very distinct assertions in this verse. First, the Apostle asserts, in an absolute and unqualified sense, the sinlessness of Christ: He "knew no sin," he says. Now this expression is even stronger than if St. Paul had said, "Jesus was not a sinner," for it seems purposely to have been chosen to remove Him from contact, even in thought, with sin. He did not "know" it; He was an utter stranger to it, so that not only did He never commit sin, but He did not know what sin was to commit it. The negative, moreover, in the Greek carries the denial of Christ's knowledge of sin into the very consciousness of Jesus, and declares that in Himself He was, as St. James (v. 1, 13) says of God, "unversed in evil"—ignorant both of its nature and of its power. No declaration of the sinlessness of Jesus could be stronger than this; and yet it is not stronger than the truth, for the character of the Lord Jesus, as we find it portrayed in the Gospels, is an absolutely sinless character. It begins, as Dr. Bushnell says in his remarkable chapter on "The Character of Jesus,"* with a lovely and perfect childhood; it develops into a manhood which the negative word "innocence" only imperfectly describes, a manhood from which no human virtue is absent,

* "Nature and the Supernatural," chap. x.

and in which all Divine goodness and grace are present in their "consummate flower." It is the one character among all the sons of men which never acknowledges a fault or confesses a sin; which never disclosed to those who knew Him most intimately any concealed weakness or failing; which united, as no other character ever has united, in perfect and stable equipoise the strong and the tender, the active and the passive virtues; which moved amid scenes of wickedness and crime, as the sunlight moves over earth's foulest places, itself undimmed and untarnished by contact with impurity, and which finally closed in a passion and death whose majestic moral grandeur has quickened in a great multitude the confession of the centurion who saw Him die, "Truly this man was the Son of God." This is the character of Jesus, a character so faultless, so unique, so Divine, that unbelief itself has been compelled to exclaim as it beheld His life, "If the life of Socrates was the life of a saint, the life of Jesus was the life of a god."

Strong as is St. Paul's expression, "who knew no sin," anything weaker would be untrue of Jesus. And yet it is to be noticed that St. Paul uses an equally strong term in describing what Jesus became for man as he uses in asserting His personal sinlessness. The Apostle does not say, "He hath made Him to be *a sinner* for us who knew no sin;" for to have said that would not only have come too perilously near imputing personal guilt to the Lord Jesus, but it would have fallen short of the energy of the Apostle's meaning; he says, "He hath made Him to be Sin for us, who knew no sin," as if the Sinless One had become incarnate sin, and the Holy One of God had been transformed into the sum of human evil. Such is the tremendous moral paradox of this verse, and we ought not to be surprised if any explanation that may be given of it seems unsatisfactory and inadequate, for the deepest spiritual realities are not always to be apprehended by the logical reason. The following remarks, it is hoped, may throw some little light on this dark mystery.

If the Lord Jesus was not merely "a man," but Man, at once the Head and Representative of humanity, standing not only as God's representative to the human race, but as its representative to God, "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession," as He is designated in the Epistle to the Hebrews, then He must have taken, as no individual man could, the burden of human sin and guilt upon Him as if it had been His own; otherwise He would not truly have represented man to God. Just as if He had been less than He was in His equality with God, and in the perfect holiness of His character, He would have failed to have represented God to man; so if He had become man without being "made sin for us," He would have failed to have been our representative to God.

The apostasy of the race and the unspeakable guilt of its sin must have rested upon Him, not in the way of an unreal imputation, but in the deepest and most solemn reality, as being, through His own assumption of humanity, its condition and its expression before God. To say that Christ was "made sin for us," because through the depth and vividness of His spiritual sympathy He entered into the sin of others, felt its misery and guilt and the suffering it entailed, as those who themselves had committed the sin could not feel it, is to say of Christ what is true, in a less degree, of every holy and pure man who enters at all deeply into the burdens and sorrows of his fellow-men, and so far takes them upon himself. But the relation of the Lord Jesus Christ to human sin was a relation peculiar to Himself; it differed, not only in degree, but in kind, from that of any man, however saintly; and we fail, as it seems to me, to apprehend the real force of these words of St. Paul unless we see in them the declaration that in an awful and mysterious sense the Man Christ Jesus took upon Himself—because in Him humanity was summed up—the crime, and shame, and guilt of that humanity before God. The ingratitude, the wickedness, the defilement of sin, the vast accumulated guilt of the race, all were present to His consciousness as they could only have been present to One who was standing, by His own act of amazing pity and love, in the very place of sinful man. But this was not all. Guilt and punishment are correlative terms, and if the Lord Jesus bore thus on Himself the guilt of the race, He must also have borne its punishment. Nothing but this explains the Cross of Christ. The last and most bitter penalty of sin is the complete and utter separation of the sinner from God; and this, in the supreme moment of Christ's agony and death, He passed through. His awful cry of desolation, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" was the culminating point of His being "made sin for us."

The object of the Incarnation and Atonement of Christ, the third statement contained in our text, is described in terms almost as startling and as daring as those we have noticed in the former part of this verse.

St. Paul does not say Christ was "made sin for us" that we might be made righteous before God, although that would have been perfectly true, but he says it was that we "might be made," or "become the righteousness of God in Him;" that is, might receive the highest moral elevation conceivable for any creature, becoming in Christ ourselves "the righteousness of God."

Now, this is a very remarkable and suggestive ending to this verse. In its former half the Apostle, in terms of the gravest significance, has asserted the "objective" reality of the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ—He was made "sin for us;" and now in the latter half of the verse he asserts as energetically that the purpose of the death of Christ

was to confer on man a moral character so glorious, that it is only capable of being described as "the righteousness of God."

I think we may learn a valuable lesson from this fact. It is too often forgotten both by those who deny and those who maintain what is known as the "objective" theory of the Atonement, that on its objective reality all its moral power really depends. To resolve the death of Christ into a sublime manifestation of the love of God in Christ, and to deny it any relation to human sin and guilt, and to the majesty of the moral law, is to imperil its power over the conscience and heart of man. We can never dissociate the two halves of this Golden Text, "He hath made Him to be Sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

JUNE 17.—"*But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*"—Romans v. 8.

This verse is closely connected with the one that immediately precedes it. In the seventh verse St. Paul has been saying that it is hardly possible to find anyone willing to die even for a good man, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die;"* and then in broad and striking contrast with the comparative poverty of our human love, he sets the greatness and wonder of God's love to man: "But God commendeth," or as it ought to be translated, proveth "His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." That is, what man is reluctant to do for the best, God has done for the worst, has given His Son to die for us, "while we were yet sinners," and so has "proved His love toward us."

Now the first thought these words suggest to us is, that God asks no one to take His love, to use a common expression, simply *on trust*. It is quite conceivable that God might have called upon men to believe in His love simply on the affirmation of His own word; or that He might have appealed to the witness to His goodness which exists in every man's heart, and on the strength of that witness commanded His creatures to trust in His love. But God has not done this; He has, St. Paul tells us, "proved His love towards us;" that is, He has actually condescended to give man such an overwhelming proof of His love, that to doubt it now would be no less an affront to the reason than a dishonour to the heart. And this is the true ground to take when we are dealing with sceptics who reproach us, as we were reproached a few months ago, with believing on insufficient evidence. We deny it altogether. Our "faith is not vain," in the sense of being unsupported by proof. We know not only "whom we have believed," but why we have believed, and, if necessary, we are prepared to justify our faith at the bar of reason itself. Science only asks for proof, and faith here

meets science on its own ground when it declares "God proveth His love toward us."

And now let us see what the proof is. It falls into two statements of fact, each of which is contained in our Golden Text: that "Christ died for us," and next that He "died for us" "while we were yet sinners," are the two proofs God has given to the world of His love.

The death of Christ, then, according to St. Paul, was a revelation to the world of the love of God, or, to put the same truth into other words, God does not love the world because Christ died, but Christ died because God loved the world. Now for many years our Evangelical Theology has been reproached with ignoring this truth, and has been charged with falsely making the Cross of Christ the cause of God's love to man, instead of its being, as it is, the result and expression of that love. The Evangelical doctrine of the Atonement, it has been said over and over again, proceeds from this vicious and unscriptural conception of the death of Christ, which has consequently been made, not a revelation of the love of the Father, but an expedient suggested by the love of the Son to avert the Father's wrath from sinful man. This is not the place to inquire how far this charge has been justified, or it would not be difficult to show that, in order to sustain it, the doctrine of the Atonement has first of all to be caricatured, and then the caricature fastened upon Evangelical Theology as its own. But were the charge as true as it is false, it is enough to say the New Testament is not responsible for it. Here is St. Paul, for example, in whose writings the great doctrine of the Atonement occupies the foremost place, affirming, as distinctly as St. John does, that the death of Christ is the manifestation of the infinite love of God to man, and was intended to "prove" it to the world. However strongly in our teaching of the young we may feel it necessary to insist on what may be called the sacrificial side of the Atonement, its relation to the moral law of God, and to the guilt of human transgression, we cannot be too careful also to declare this great truth, that the death of Christ is the sublimest expression of God's love to the world; or to put it into the language of children, it was not necessary for Christ to die to make God love us, but Christ died to show that God already loved us.

But the death of Christ by itself is not the complete proof of God's love, for we have yet to take into account for whom it was Christ died. "While we were yet sinners," St. Paul says, "Christ died for us;" and he adduces this fact as adding a transcendent value to Christ's death as a proof of God's love to man. It is as if the Apostle were saying, "If the Son of God had died for good men it would have been an amazing act of love, but to die for us, who were unholy and rebellious and guilty, who were deserving of nothing but the wrath and condem-

nation of God, is indeed to give the world the highest possible evidence that "God is love."

Now it is certain that the Apostle must have believed in the responsibility of man for his sin, or he could not have written these words; for if our sin be our misfortune rather than our fault, it certainly was no very great act of love on the part of God to interpose to rescue His creatures from a misery for which they were in no way responsible. "Do not even the publicans the same?" But, on the other hand, if our sin be a wilful and deliberate disobedience of God's law, if the very word sin means guilt, and guilt of the darkest and most criminal kind, then we can understand that for God to give up His own Son to die for a race which had covered itself with shame and guilt by its voluntary rebellion against Him, was an infinite expression of an infinite love. And this is why a profound sense of sin is always associated with a profound realisation of the greatness of the love of God, as seen in the Cross of Christ. The moment we begin to weaken the conviction of our personal guilt, or to excuse it on any ground whatsoever, we also weaken God's own proof of His love to us. It is impossible for the death of Christ to be the same thing to the man who thinks of his sins—if he still call them by so unmeaning a term—as the inevitable results of the nature with which he is born into the world, that it is to him who sees in every fresh transgression only a new proof of his wilful alienation of heart from God.

There is no room in Materialism for the love of God in Christ, for there is no meaning in the words, "God proveth His love toward us, in that, *while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us."

Teachers also may make a very grave practical mistake in their teaching from forgetfulness of these words. To say to our children, "Be good and God will love you," is to invert the true order of the Gospel message; for its appeal to the old as well as to the young is this, "God loves you, therefore be good."

This leads us to our last remark. It will not be overlooked that the Apostle in this verse uses the present tense. He does not say, "God has proved His love toward us," as if it were a thing once accomplished in the past, but he speaks of it as a present reality, as if it were a proof going on still—"God proveth His love toward us." And it is. For it is one of the greatest wonders of the Cross of Christ that it never

* It is worth remarking that the popular idea of the terms "righteous" and "good" being contrasted here, is unfounded. St. Paul is not saying that some who would not die for a "righteous man" might possibly die for a "good man"; but he is simply carrying out and expressing in the latter clause of the verse, the hesitancy and doubt implied in the "scarcely" of the former clause.

grows old. Christ had been crucified more than twenty-five years when St. Paul wrote this Epistle to the Romans, and yet the Apostle speaks of His death as a present proof to them of the love of God; and we who live more than 1800 years after his death, find it just as fresh and as real as if with our own eyes we had seen "Jesus Christ crucified." The facts of the life and death of Christ are the only facts in the history of the world over which time has no power, but which with unexhausted and inexhaustible energy go on speaking to the heart of man, age after age, with the same tenderness and power that the disciples of old felt when they were "eye-witnesses," not only of His majesty, but of the love and sorrow of His passion and death.

JUNE 24.—"*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.*"—1 Cor. xv. 20.

These words are the conclusion of an argument and not a mere assertion of St. Paul. In the verses preceding this text the Apostle has been engaged in the proof of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead, and has divided his argument into two parts. First of all, he adduces the enormous weight of testimony there was to the fact, and testimony of honest and unprejudiced witnesses. Peter, James, the twelve Apostles, the five hundred brethren—most of whom were living and could be interrogated—and last of all himself, all declared, with one voice, they had seen Jesus alive after His death. This forms what may be called the historical proof of Christ's resurrection; but in addition to it, St. Paul goes on to urge the "moral proofs" of the resurrection. "If Christ be not risen," then a startling series of results, each of which is a moral paradox, at once arise. First of all, "our preaching is vain and your faith is also vain" (ver. 14), that is, the preaching and the faith which had been "the power of God unto salvation" to these Corinthians had been no such thing, for they "were yet in their sins" (ver. 17); a result, the very statement of which was an utter absurdity. Not only so, the men who had preached the truth to them were liars, "were found false witnesses of God" (ver. 15), which was a contradiction in terms. More still, "if Christ be not raised . . . then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (ver. 18), that is, the saintly men and women who had died believing they were departing "to be with Christ," were allowed by God to perish with a lie for a hope, to imagine which is a monstrous blasphemy against God; and, last of all, "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (ver. 19); "most miserable," not because the new life we now live in Christ would we worthless without an immortal life beyond the grave—the Apostle would not say that—but because we should be driven to the terrible conclusion that we have been made "new creatures in Christ

Jesus" by believing in a falsehood, and that the truth belongs to those who are unbelieving and worldly and sensual,—a conclusion which at once subverts the moral foundations of the universe. These are the moral arguments St. Paul urges as additional proofs of the fact of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, and which he now again affirms with emphasis, against all these preposterous moral paradoxes, to be the truth: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."

We can hardly overrate the value of the testimony which the Apostle here bears to the reality of Christ's resurrection. No one has ever doubted or denied that in this first Epistle to the Corinthians we have a genuine letter written by St. Paul, and written not more than twenty-five years after the death of Christ, so that we have undeniable historical proof, not only that the resurrection of Christ was believed in by all the Apostles, including St. Paul, but that it was of the substance of the Apostolic preaching, and the foundation on which the very earliest Christian Churches were built. In fact, it may truly be said there is no single fact in the whole history of the world for which there is such an accumulation and variety of evidence as for the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead. Were it an ordinary fact, further argument would be felt to be unnecessary in the presence of such overwhelming proof of its occurrence as we possess, and the Christian apologists would say about it what Professor Huxley says about the doctrine of evolution, that he declines to discuss it any longer. But it is confessedly not an ordinary fact: it is an extraordinary and supernatural fact, and because it is, evidence that would have been admitted a hundred times over in any other case, is suspected and questioned and finally denied. But when we come to ask why evidence that is valid about one fact should be declared invalid when offered concerning the Resurrection, we find no better reason given than this: the supernatural is unprovable, the Resurrection of Christ is a supernatural fact, therefore no evidence is sufficient to prove it. This is really the great syllogism of modern unbelief, but, unfortunately for its legitimacy, its "unprovable" premise remains for ever unprovable.

It is very instructive to notice the intellectual straits to which even able men are reduced when they endeavour to account for the rise of the Church's belief in the Resurrection, while denying its occurrence. Perhaps the most curious instance of this appeared in the *Contemporary Review* of November, 1876. In that number appeared two articles, written by well-known literary men—one from the pen of Mr. Matthew Arnold, the other by Mr. W. R. Greg, and each of these articles professed to explain this very belief in the Resurrection of which we are speaking. Mr. Arnold tells us that "those who do not admit the

miraculous can yet well conceive how such a belief arose and was entertained by St. Paul," and he then goes on to account for it by saying that "Jesus Himself had in His lifetime spoken frequently of His own coming resurrection. Such beliefs as the belief in bodily resurrection were a part of the mental atmosphere in which the first Christians lived. It was inevitable that they should believe their Master to have risen again in the body." (*Contemporary Review*, p. 905). But what does Mr. Greg say in the same number of the *Review*? Quite unconscious that he is entirely demolishing the argument of Mr. Arnold a few pages earlier, he says: "If one conclusion from the records be more certain than another, it is that Christ's most intimate friends and disciples, even the Twelve, looked upon His crucifixion as the termination of His career, the prostration and crushing of all their hopes, the end of all things, as far as their faith and future were concerned. They not only had no expectation of their Lord's resurrection: they had plainly never dreamed of such a thing, the bare idea of it appears never to have crossed their minds, the rumour of the occurrence, when reported to them, 'seemed to them as idle tales; nay, they had the greatest difficulty in realising the fact even when Jesus appeared to them.'" And then Mr. Greg goes on to ask: "Is it credible, is it even conceivable, that this should have been their state of mind if the Resurrection had been repeatedly foretold to them by their beloved Master, and specifically as the sequel of the crucifixion?" (*Contemporary Review*, p. 998). It ought to be added that, with a certain amount of reserve, Mr. Greg attempts to explain the belief in the Resurrection by the supposition that Christ never really died, but only fainted on the cross. But the spectacle of able men attempting to explain, or rather to explain away, the belief in the Resurrection of the Lord by mutually destructive suppositions, the one flatly denying the hypothesis of the other, ought to lead serious and thoughtful Christian people to ask whether such rationalistic explanations do not more grossly affront the reason than the old and simple one, that the early Christians believed in the Resurrection for the simplest of all reasons, because it had really taken place.

St. Paul, however, tells us Christ's resurrection from the dead was more than an historical fact, for by it Christ became "the firstfruits of them that slept." Now, to understand this expression, we must understand the meaning of the "firstfruits." The Jews were accustomed, on the second day of the Paschal feast, to present before the Lord in the Temple the first sheaf cut from the barley then ripe in their fields. It was a public and devout acknowledgment that the whole harvest belonged to God, and was offered as such. Now Christ rose from the dead on the very day after this "firstfruits" had been dedicated to God, and the thought in the Apostle's mind seems to be

this: Just as that single sheaf of barley offered to God declared all that was left was God's, so this one resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the public pledge and prophecy that all the dead belong likewise to God; for "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living," and just as He raised Jesus from the dead, so will He also raise them." We ought never to forget this in our teaching. The resurrection of Christ is far more than a solitary historical fact: it is a spiritual reality that affects all "them that sleep." To deny it is to take away the one foundation on which all our hope of an immortal life beyond the grave rests; whilst to believe it is to hear His voice saying to us, even while we mourn the dead, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

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THE RIDSDALE JUDGMENT.

WHATEVER be the composition of an Ecclesiastical Court of Appeal, we may be tolerably sure that the genius of compromise will be the presiding judge. The formidable tribunal which sat to decide the difficult questions at issue in the Folkestone Ritual case was no exception to this rule. It was composed of ten of the ablest judges in the land, and they were reinforced by the Primate and four other Prelates, who sat as assessors, and were able to supplement any defects arising from the lack of theological or ritual knowledge in the secular members of the Court. But even this body has failed to give a decision which will be final and conclusive. It is a relief, indeed, to find that it was able to give a definite opinion on any of the questions submitted to it. After the hesitating and uncertain utterances with which we are familiar, it is a surprise, as well as a satisfaction, to have the illegality of so many Romish practices distinctly affirmed. About the vestments, the use of the crucifix, and wafer-bread the controversy is closed. In relation to the last of these points, indeed, Mr. Ridsdale himself was acquitted on technical grounds, no room being left to question the unlawfulness of the wafers in which Ritualists delight, though he, like all accused persons, was allowed the benefit of a doubt as to whether he himself had actually employed them. How a man who professes to be contending for his own rights as a priest, and for the reverence due to the sacrament he celebrates, can condescend to accept an acquittal on such grounds, is to us a puzzle. We should have expected one who is fighting such a battle to scorn all concealment, boldly to avow and glory in his acts, and to challenge a decision on them on their merits. But these are not the tactics of the school, and as no one desires to punish

individuals, there is no need to object to the mode in which they conduct the battle, provided the real issue is not evaded. No one ought to have regretted, though Mr. Ridsdale had escaped all penal consequences, if a distinct condemnation had been passed on the practices for which he was indicted. The weakness of the judgment consists in its failure to settle the most crucial question of all. In relation to the extreme points in which the advanced Ritualists are chiefly, if not solely, interested, it is clear enough; but to the question which affects High Churchmen of a more moderate type, and which, unimportant as it may seem in one aspect, is practically the key of the situation, it gives no distinct answer at all. The eastward position is that of a sacrificing priest. It is valued because of the countenance it gives to the idea that the priest represents the sacrifice of the cross on the altar of the church. If it be conceded, or if it be made optional, therefore, a serious blow is administered to Anglican Protestantism. Of all points, therefore, this should not be left doubtful. But the Judicial Committee leave it almost as they found it. There are pregnant hints as to what the law is, but they are such only as may serve for a stimulus to fresh litigation, and really do nothing to end this long-vexed and agitating controversy.

The Judges, indeed, may be congratulated on the ingenuity with which they have devised a new mode of compromise which even the cleverest guesser had not foreshadowed. Some expected them to pronounce it illegal and inadmissible, and others hoped that liberty might be given in relation to it. But the particular form which the judgment has taken could hardly have been foreseen by anyone. The exact words are these: "The minister is to order the elements 'standing before the people': words which, whether the table stands 'altarwise,' along the east wall, or in the body of the church or chancel, would be fully satisfied by his standing on the north side and looking towards the south; but which also, in the opinion of their Lordships, as the tables are now, and, in their opinion, lawfully, placed, authorise him to do those acts standing on the west side and looking towards the east. Beyond this and after this there is no specific direction that during the prayer he is to stand on the west side, or that he is to stand on the north side. He must, in the opinion of their Lordships, stand so that he may in good faith enable the communicants present, or the bulk of them, being properly placed, to see, if they wish it, the breaking of the bread and the performance of the other manual acts mentioned. He must not interpose his body so as intentionally to defeat the object of the rubric and prevent this result." A conclusion more lame and impotent, more likely to add new elements of difficulty and bitterness to the strife which it ought to have composed, more fitted to degrade the whole of the controversy and stimulate ingenuity to search out fresh modes of evasion,

if not artifice, has seldom if ever been pronounced by a Court possessed of such high authority. That ten judges should have reached nothing more certain would be surprising, but for the fact that they were assisted by five Episcopal assessors. If the Chancellor and ex-Chancellor, the Lords Justices of Appeal, and the Lord Chief Justice, were in the habit of settling the complicated questions that come before them in similar fashion, the administration of law would speedily be brought into contempt, and instead of the plethora of business which now chokes the Courts and seem to justify a demand for more judicial power, the judges we have now would have time enough and to spare. How is it that men who are so clear and authoritative when acting in their own civil Courts are thus feeble and hesitating when called to deal with ecclesiastical matters? Suitors no doubt often object to the decisions which are given when adverse to themselves, but they have seldom reason to complain that they are not intelligible, or even that they unsettle more questions than they decide, or create more serious difficulties than they seem to remove. How is it that there is so marked a difference in the case of an ecclesiastical tribunal, even though it be composed of the same judges?

Perhaps something is due to the number of Judges who heard the appeal, and to the particular form in which their judgment was delivered. Among ten men there may very naturally arise differences of opinion, and if the judgment is to be given by the body as a whole, and not separately by each member of the Court, it is pretty certain that there will be compromise. The preliminary discussions must have been curious, and no doubt eminently instructive, and could we have the report of them we should probably find that the decision is the result of mutual concessions, and that these had been facilitated by the interposition of the Bishops. The introduction of these Prelates at all is somewhat anomalous, and the position they occupy still more so. They have no voice, and yet it cannot be doubted that their opinions exert a certain influence. They do not share the full responsibility of the tribunal, but it is impossible to suppose that they do not affect its decisions. They are neither advocates nor judges, and yet it is probable that to some extent they act the part of the former and at the same time have something very like the authority of the latter. It is not easy to conceive of a more unfortunate situation, or one which is likely to tell more injuriously on a perfectly fair and impartial administration of the law. Here are divines admitted into the intimate counsels of judges, and even permitted to advise them, and yet not judges themselves. What can be so probable as that they will act as special pleaders on behalf of those with whom they have theological affinities? If they had judicial functions they would, as honourable men, feel bound to watch against such tendencies, however impossible some of them might find it to

escape their influence, and however few of them might attain to that perfect equipoise of feeling which distinguishes the Bench. Remembering the strength of theological feeling, it would be absurd to suppose that a Baring on the one side or a Wordsworth on the other would ever be so trusted by the party to which they are opposed as to command absolute respect, and it was wise therefore to exclude Bishops from the Judicial Committee. But it must not be forgotten that in relegating them to the position of mere assessors, the strongest motive for the exercise of careful impartiality was withdrawn. They are not required to administer the law, and are not to be condemned if they do not look at the points raised in a legal spirit, but are affected by the considerations of policy which might naturally suggest themselves to Prelates aspiring to be thought ecclesiastical statesmen. It is impossible that they can have a place of any kind in the Court without exerting influence, and our contention is that under the present arrangement that influence must be exercised under the most unfavourable conditions. Keeping this fact in mind, we are not surprised that the judgment is not calculated to bring about a final settlement of all the points that had been raised. It would have been a marvel if ten lay lords had been able to come to a positive agreement without admitting a considerable element of compromise; but when the advice of five Bishops, from whom the restraint which judicial responsibility would impose has been withdrawn, is introduced, such harmony would be little short of a miracle. The very conditions under which the Court acted, therefore, were unfavourable to any approach to vigour and decisiveness. These are qualities which Bishops do not affect, and in truth regard with distrust and aversion, because they see in them menace and peril to an Establishment whose continuance is dependent on the possibility of maintaining the existing compromise. Should the tension be made too severe on any point they know there must be a speedy collapse of the institution, and their aim consequently is to distribute the pressure equally. That this would be the spirit of the iradvice to the Judges they were appointed to assist is unquestionable, and the terms of the decision suggest the idea that it was not tendered in vain.

It is not for us presumptuously to criticise the law of the judgment, but if it be sound it is certainly fortunate for the Erastians that it is in exact accord with the dictates of what passes for statesmanship in exalted Church circles. It may prove that Church-craft is as unwise, and in the long run as unsuccessful, as State-craft, and that the straightforward course which abjures all idea of policy, and looks only to right and law, would have been the safest as well as the noblest. The line which the judgment has marked out is, at all events, that which we have been taught to regard as the highest manifestation of ecclesiastical

sagacity. It is meant to divide High Churchmen whom it would be dangerous to offend, from Ritualists whom it would be perilous even to try to conciliate. If this be also the line prescribed by strict law, the agreement is certainly a happy one for the Establishment, to which it seems to offer one last chance of escape from those internal dissensions which are threatening its security. If it were possible to induce all parties to carry it out with loyalty to the Church and consideration for each other; if Ritualists would at once cast aside those splendid garments which to numbers of Protestants are nothing better than vestments of Babylon, and fit only for the priests of Baal; and if Evangelicals, content with so signal a success, would give up any thought of worrying High Churchmen about the eastward position; if Lord Penzance should thus cease to be offensive in consequence of his office having become a sinecure, and the Judicial Committee should be allowed that interval of rest which would allow its over-burdened members to attend to other work which has got so sadly in arrear; above all, if the Church Association and the English Church Union could both be dissolved and the prosecuting wolves of the one be content to lie down in the same green pastures with the innocent lambs of the other, then an insurance on the life of the Establishment would be taken at a considerably lower premium than would have been safe for some time past. But this is exactly what is not likely to be. The policy is too transparent to be successful; High Churchmen and Ritualists will not be so easily induced to divide in order that their common enemy may conquer, and it is not probable that Evangelicals, with all their "sweet reasonableness," will abstain from further efforts to get rid of a practice against which they have so earnestly protested, which is just as symbolic and as sacerdotal as the vestments whose condemnation they have been able to secure. But if this be so, it is hard to see what compromise could be proposed, and how the present strife could be ended. Poor as this device may seem, it is probably the best that could be suggested under the circumstances, and if this be the law, the coincidence is as singular as it is fortunate. It is not often that the law is found to accommodate itself so perfectly to the requirements of policy.

It must not be forgotten that the suspicion that "statesmanlike considerations" has had no little effect in modifying the conclusion which the Court has reached, goes very far to produce the dissatisfaction of which there have already been some decided manifestations, and which is likely to find stronger expression. When suitors have appealed to the arbitrament of law, they are, for the most part, content to abide by the decisions of the Courts, however unacceptable they may be. Englishmen are, proverbially, a law-abiding people, and though of course there

is continually a good deal of secret grumbling among disappointed litigants, it is seldom that it finds any open utterance. Men may think in their hearts, or even say in their own private circles, that they knew the law better than judge or jury who decided against them, or that their counsel failed to present their case with sufficient force, or that equity and justice were on their side, though law had pronounced on the opposite. But there it ends. They retain the belief which reconciles them to the vexation of defeat, and the law takes its course. Why is it that it is so different in ecclesiastical matters? The clergy should be an example to all classes of the community in reverence for constituted authority and submission to the law. But the reverse of this is true. The audacity of the clergy in their defiance of rule, and their claim to be a law unto themselves is, happily, as exceptional as it is discreditable. We are bound to say, however, that it is not without extenuating circumstances. Besides their objections to the jurisdiction of a Secular Court, whose members, as they believe, are interfering with points on which they are as incompetent as they are unauthorised to pronounce, they have the conviction that the Judges do not confine themselves to the interpretation and enforcement of the law, but attempt to lay down a policy.

Herein lies one of the differences between appeals to the Courts of Law in relation to any property held by Dissenters, and such suits as that which this judgment ends. If the trusts on which a Congregational or Baptist Chapel is held are in dispute, the Court simply applies the test of law, and decides the rights of the contending parties accordingly. It would never stop to consider what effect its decrees would have on the peace of the Congregational or Baptist Unions, or even on the relations of the individuals whose acts were under discussion to the other ministers of their communion. The Statute-Book would be the only authority consulted, and its decisions would be final. Very probably the defeated party would fret under them; but there would be no suggestion of improper motive, or of reference to any consideration outside the letter of the law. In the case of the Established Church all this is changed. The idea has been so constantly inculcated that there must not be too rigid an application of the law, and in fact that such enforcement would be impossible—that, as more than one bishop has told us, to carry out the Act of Uniformity would be to destroy the Church—that it is only too generally, perhaps too readily, assumed that the Court in ecclesiastical cases will not be governed absolutely and solely by the Statute-Book. As the result, there is dissatisfaction on the part of those who are unsuccessful. They suspect, justly or unjustly, that they are sacrificed to the exigencies, real or supposed, of the Establishment, and the submission which

would at once have been rendered to a judgment felt to be strictly legal, is refused to a decision which [appears to be dictated by a policy about whose expediency they are doubtful. It would be unjust to the clergy to ignore this aspect of the case, which goes some way to explain what otherwise would be unintelligible, and to excuse what would else be without even a shadow of apology.

If the Ecclesiastical Courts have incurred a considerable measure of contempt, it is due entirely to their own actions. They were unfaithful to their obligations to the law before Churchmen became so disloyal and insulting to them. The Judicial Committee has assumed a *quasi-legislative* as well as an executive character, and it has consequently exposed itself to the criticisms which the usurpation of such functions is calculated to provoke. From the time of the Gorham Judgment downwards the Court has assumed a dispensing power, which has enlarged the bounds of the Church's comprehensiveness, but really broken down the fences of law. A more perilous course, or one more certain to lead to difficulties, could not have been entered upon. Even the Dean of Westminster, with all his desire for liberty, and his admiration of the action of the Supreme Court as tending to secure it, is compelled to write thus doubtfully: "There is no question that, on the whole, its decisions have tended to widen rather than to narrow the basis of the Church. But, nevertheless, they have been procured at the risk of much agitation and heart-burning; there is always the chance of even its judgments being shaken by the popular feeling at the moment; there have been judgments delivered, and there may be yet again, of which the avowed purpose was not to include, but to exclude, unpopular persons or opinions; there is the certainty of its being called upon to decide questions which in point of fact were not intended to be brought before it." This is surely an extraordinary style to adopt in writing about a Court of Law. If it were a consulting committee, whose judgments were in danger of being affected by popular opinion, there would be good reason for the apprehension, but in England it has always been assumed that our legal tribunals are superior to such influences, inaccessible, indeed, to any considerations except those of the law. It may be expedient to widen the basis of the Church, but the point is one which only the Legislature has a right to determine, and any attempt to encroach on the rights of Parliament in this matter must be as perilous as it certainly is unjustifiable. The Dean himself perceives that, though liberty may have profited by it hitherto, it is quite possible that it may yet lead to results of an opposite kind. But what we chiefly note here is that the Court impairs its own authority, and lays itself open to all kinds of insinuations, when once it departs from the straight line of legal duty, and follows the

devious paths of policy, however noble the motive by which that policy is dictated, and however right the end which it seeks.

It is only up to a certain point that any Court, however desirous of keeping the peace, and however willing, with this view, to connive at certain transgressions of law, can possibly act upon the principle of toleration. For a time it may strain the interpretation of statutes and rubrics, so as to grant an indulgence which could not be defended on any logical grounds; but the spirit of license which is thus encouraged becomes intolerable. Either the law itself is too plain to admit of doubt, or popular feeling is too sensitive to be ignored, and an adverse decision is given, only to provoke a resentment on the part of the condemned, all the stronger because they feel that there are no just grounds for the invidious distinction between themselves and those who have escaped, and that the former weakness in the administration of the law has lured them on to the very offences which are now punished. In this way the vacillation and inconsistency of a court may turn what in itself is a perfectly righteous act into a piece of persecution.

We have only to apply these general observations to the history of the judgments which have been given by the Judicial Committee, and especially to this last one, to understand the kind of feeling which has been awakened. The Court, in adjudicating on the matters of the Folkestone ritual, has acted in a more legal spirit than on almost any previous occasion. We scruple not to assert that if the same temper had prevailed when the teaching of Mr. Bennett was the point at issue, that gentleman would never have had indulgence accorded to him; and, to go further back, had a like tribunal judged Mr. Gorham, not all his qualifications of the points in his teaching which were impeached would have saved him from condemnation. That the decision in relation to the vestments is strictly legal may be capable of proof, but this conclusion is reached by a severe application of principles, which are a novelty in this Court, except in the case of Rationalist divines who, having few friends and holding unpopular opinions, have been more summarily dealt with. If the Ritualists are specially infuriated, therefore, it is not surprising. It may be that the suit will mark the beginning of a new mode of action, just as Lord Penzance's trenchant methods in the inferior Court are as different as possible from those to which ecclesiastics generally have been accustomed. But inasmuch as they are the first victims, it is only to be expected that their anger should burn fiercely, and their protests be loud and passionate. Indeed, even the judgment itself suggests a doubt whether it is intended to maintain this strict law in all cases. There is a perceptible distinction between the spirit shown in relation to the vestments, and that which has shaped the very subtle decision

relative to the eastward position—a distinction in which, with a jealous suspicion which is extremely pardonable, Ritualists will at once recognise the consideration shown to the powerful party, who attach no importance to the former, but who would shiver the Church to pieces rather than give up the latter. For ourselves, we regard it not only as a humiliation to the Church, but as a discredit to the law, and a misfortune to the country at large, that there should be a legal tribunal about whose acts such a discussion could arise, whose decisions should be tested by the wisdom of their policy rather than by the soundness of their law, and which especially should give any shadow of a ground for the allegation that in the course which it pursues it has regard to the numbers or status of the suitors, instead of looking solely at the merits of the suit. It is one of the fruits of an Establishment, and the country suffers to the extent that the purity of the law is sullied by one of its tribunals being exposed to such imputations. We frankly recognise the improvement in the character of the decision, and we can only wish that the same recognition of the paramount authority of the law which is shown in one part of it had run through the whole. Unhappily one half of it is almost as inconsistent in spirit with the other half as with other judgments that have proceeded from the same Court.

The *Rock* is very near the truth when it says, "Peace there cannot be and will not be until the traitors are expelled in a body from a communion in which they have no legitimate status, and with which, as settled at the Reformation, they have no sympathy." This is the issue which has been raised by the Church Association, and which it had a perfect right to raise, nay, was bound to raise, if the Protestantism of the Establishment is to be anything more than a name. But if it be so, then the case has certainly been decided against Protestantism. There is no reason why all the "traitors" may not continue to play the priest within the Establishment, provided they do not assume the forbidden robes, or place themselves in such a position at the altar as to hide their proceedings from the view of the communicants. The attempt of the Evangelicals to show that theirs is a Protestant Church has signally failed. It may still include among its members many who are faithful sons of Protestantism, but it is now clear that there is no power to expel those who scorn its name and trample upon its principles. They may, and probably will, appeal again to the Court in the hope of securing a condemnation of the sacerdotal position, but they must be sanguine indeed if they cherish any hope of success unless, indeed, their opponents themselves determine to furnish them with proof which otherwise it would be very hard to obtain.

But, while unable to see that the Evangelicals have done anything

effectual, or will do anything effectual until they secure a decision which will render impossible the continuance of Romanisers within the Establishment, we cannot ignore the difficulty in which the present judgment places High Churchmen. They are not forbidden to stand at the west side of the altar, and, indeed, are allowed to stand where they will, if they take care that all the manual acts be done *coram populo*, that is, they may retain the eastward position, provided they will not do the very thing for which alone they care about. How they are to comply with the condition is not very apparent, nor was it the business of the Court to instruct them. The Rubric contains a certain requirement, and if they fulfil that, the judgment declares them innocent of any transgression of the law. But to all ordinary thinkers it would seem as if they must abandon their favourite position if they are to comply with what is thus imperatively laid down. If a clergyman stands with his back to a congregation, and in that position breaks bread, there must be a reversal of the ordinary physical laws before the people can see what he is doing. Possibly by a slight deflection to the right or to the left he might so place himself as to make his proceedings seen to a certain section; but the question would come whether this would satisfy the terms of the Rubric, that is, whether an act could truly be said to have been done *coram populo* which was effectually hidden from the great majority of them. It may become a nice point to decide whether in the not improbable case of a conflict of testimony, most importance should be attached to the negative assertions of the one class, or the positive statements of the other. It is easy to suppose that those occupying a certain position on either side of the celebrant may be able honestly to declare that the whole action was visible to them, although there can be no reasonable question that the intention of the Rubric has been frustrated. It will need another suit, probably more than one suit, to determine the delicate and knotty points which the judgment thus raises, and it is no credit to those by whom it has been given that they have left such opening for litigation. If, indeed, High Churchmen are actuated by the spirit which led Daniel, after Belshazzar had issued his decree against prayer, to throw open his window and there to pray three times a day with his face set towards Jerusalem, the difficulty cannot arise. They mean that the people shall not see, and if they follow the course they have hitherto pursued, it is certain the people will not see. Of this no one who has ever been present at a Ritualist Mass can need any assurance, and it is hard to believe that conscientious Christian men will resort to mere artifice in order to evade a law. The suggestion that a priest should incline a little to a corner, where some of his friends and sympathisers shall be seated, is really so discreditable that we shall not suppose it possible that it can be adopted until recourse has actually

been had to this miserable dodge. Surely theological and ecclesiastical strife will not lead men who have a principle to maintain to degrade themselves and it after this fashion.

There is thus nothing in the judgment on which High Churchmen can look with complacency, and when we take into account the state of mind relative to the Court in which it finds them, it is not easy to believe that it will be quietly accepted. If any weight attaches to the bitter denunciations of these secular Courts to which we have listened lately, no decision, however favourable to High Church views, could have reconciled the party to the tribunal from which it proceeded. But when the judgment comes directly across some of their most cherished ideas, it can hardly fail to provoke angry resistance, and we do not think that its intensity will be at all abated by the hesitating, compromising spirit which marks the judgment. Had there been evidences of resolute will and fixed adherence to law, its very strength would have commanded a certain amount of respect. But it is hard for Ritualists, at all events, to believe that this is the case, when they see two different modes of treatment adopted, and an excessive stringency employed when the weak only will be affected by its pressure, which contrasts with the singular leniency shown to those whom it would be dangerous to offend. We are not at all surprised, therefore, at the irritation which has been excited. A Ritualist advocate might very fairly say to the Judges, "My Lords, we have a right to ask that you will, at least, be consistent in the principles on which you proceed, and not add to the proverbial uncertainties of the law uncertainties still more serious and more disturbing from a vacillation on your own part. If you mean to be severe, how is it that you invent excuses, whose weakness must have been as transparent to yourselves as to all the world, in relation to the position of the celebrant? If, on the contrary, your aim is to carry out a scheme of comprehension, and allow as much liberty as the formularies on their most liberal construction will permit, how is it that you have recourse to such subtle reasoning in order to prove the vestments illegal? It cannot be that trimming like this can ultimately benefit the Church, and in the meantime it dishonours the Court and discredits the law which it has to administer. Let us know how we are to be governed, and we will endeavour to accommodate ourselves to the circumstances. It is hard to be under subjection to Cæsar, but it becomes harder still if Cæsar is to play the part of an arbitrary tyrant, increasing or relaxing the pressure of the law as it suits his own caprice, or the supposed interest of the State. Tell us what the law is, and it will be for us to decide whether compliance is possible. But mock us not by encouraging hopes of toleration, only to dash them at once by some act in which law is stretched to its utmost limit. Above all, do not scatter seeds of dissension among

ourselves by granting an indulgence to the moderate and the powerful, which is denied to the weak, who also happen to be the extreme."

We do not see what answer could be returned to an argument like this. The two parts of the judgment do not agree. As we read the pleadings, we felt, and we feel still, that the argument for the vestments was stronger than that for the eastward position. We do not for a moment dispute the finding of the Court on the former, for the usage of centuries is sufficient to overbear any argument derived from a disputed Rubric. But to be so decided on this, and then to acquit on the other count, where the defendant's case was really weaker, is an inconsistency which destroys such moral force as the judgment would otherwise have possessed. The *Church Times* speaks strongly when it says: "There is no likelihood henceforth of any confidence being placed in the integrity of the Privy Council, for it has flung away its character with both hands;" but many who would hesitate to endorse so severe a verdict would yet deny that this judgment is a righteous one.

To sum up. Our own view is, that neither of the parties in the Church can be satisfied with the result, and that the Establishment itself will not be strengthened by it. The Evangelicals may rejoice that the practices which they have been opposing are shown to be illegal; but if they are not blinded by prejudice, they must see more clearly than ever the enormous difficulty of purging the Establishment of that sacerdotalism which is the cause of all the evil. The High Churchmen will smart under the blow which has been inflicted, and the still severer one with which they are manifestly threatened. The Broad Church will be annoyed to find that the liberty of the clergy is narrowed, and that the Judges have taken no account of the existence of different schools of thought in the Church, but, where they have not condemned the appellant, have proceeded on the ground of insufficient evidence alone. What has been gained is not very manifest, for he must be sanguine indeed who believes that earnest priests will be less determined in the assertion of their claims, or less active in the propagation of their sacramentarian errors, because they are forbidden to wear their millinery, and blaze forth in all the colours of the rainbow.

The Evangelicals are evidently prepared to hail the issue as a triumph for themselves. No one who knows them can be astonished at this, but no one who studies the judgment carefully can affect to share their self-complacent feeling. Though an important point has been decided in their favour, or rather in agreement with their views, it may safely be assumed that the decision has not been affected by a consideration for them. If there ever was a fear lest an excessive indulgence to High Churchmen or even sacerdotalists might lead the Evangelicals to secede, that has long since been dismissed as absolutely groundless. Such anxieties as diplomatic

prelates or subtle politicians have had, have been of an entirely different character. The party which could be thankful for the Bennett judgment was not likely to be roused to active resistance by any decision that might be reached in relation to the vestments or position of the sacrificing priest. We are not sure that even the enforced use of alb and chasuble, and of colours suitable to the seasons of the Christian year, would have goaded more than a section of them into rebellion. A letter which appeared in the *Times* a few months ago from an eminent clergyman of their school, suggests that as they have donned the surplice at the bidding of the law, they would not shrink from going still further if the law had required it at their hands. They seem strangely unconscious of the insignificance to which their own feebleness and hesitation have doomed them, but, whether they know it or not, they have ceased to be regarded as a powerful element in the Church. That a regard to Protestant feeling has been an element affecting the decision of the Court we doubt not, and the prohibition of the vestments may be regarded as an evidence of its power. But it is the Protestantism of the nation which is felt to have weight and which has secured this consideration, not that of the clerical party within the Establishment who take credit for being its special champion. Their service to the national Protestantism is indeed sufficiently doubtful. If a lynx-eyed jealousy in detecting Romish tendencies in practices that are at least indifferent, and possibly both seemly and useful; if a singular capacity for identifying Protestantism with causes that are not only unpopular, but positively immoral, like that of Turkey at the present time; if an utter inability to understand, or a cowardly reluctance to carry out, the fundamental principles of Protestantism, be good services, then they may be regarded as wise and faithful champions of the noble cause with which they are anxious to associate themselves. But if Protestantism needs that its champions should combine with thorough loyalty to the truth a wise understanding of the signs of the times, a real largeness of heart, and an unflinching courage in action as well as speech, they have been lamentably deficient. They have hesitated where there was need of decision, they have halted where they ought to have advanced; they have been silent when they should have lifted up their voice like a trumpet, in the hope of stirring the slumbering consciences of the people. It has been their misfortune to do either too much or too little. They have protested too loudly, unless they were prepared to give effect to their denunciations. They have appealed to Cæsar without being prepared to accept the consequences of their appeal, and have welcomed humbling defeats as though they had been victories. If the world is disposed to laugh at these controversies as though they were related to trifling matters, the responsibility is theirs, for their meek acquiescence

in decisions which they might have been expected to resist at all costs could give no other impression. In short, they have been paralysed by a divided heart, which has been anxious at once about the interest of Protestantism and the security of the Establishment, and has ended by giving the preference to the latter.

That they would hail the present judgment was certain. It is better than it might have been, better than others by which it has been preceded. Cerberus has got a sop, and it is natural he should be delighted, and all the more because there was but slight reason to expect it. If Sir Fitz-James Stephens' speech in defence of the use of the vestments did not convince his hearers of their legality, it showed at least how easy it would be for the judges to permit their use without exposing themselves to a charge of partiality. That the Court has done right in treating the whole subject on broader principles, and refusing to ignore the practice of three centuries in the interpretation of an ambiguous rubric, is probably true. But in doing so it has shown a strength which was hardly to be anticipated, and which is altogether inconsistent with its feeble and halting decision relative to the position of the minister at the altar. On this concession the Evangelicals might reasonably congratulate themselves, did it stand alone. But the sacrificial position has always been treated by them as of equal importance with the sacrificial dress. In some respects it is more so, for it is equally symbolic without being so offensive, and is adopted by hundreds, if not thousands, of clergymen who hesitate to assume the vestments. In the interests of Anglican Protestantism, it would have been better that the Court should have tolerated what it has prohibited and prohibited what it has tolerated; and we must add that, had it been governed by law alone, this is what it would have done, for the case against the eastward position is decidedly stronger than that against the vestments. The Evangelicals, however, are thankful for what they have got, apparently unconscious that the tolerance of the priestly position at the altar is really fatal to the Protestant view. The *Record* is not without an inkling of the truth, for it says: "It is a judgment with which neither party in the Church can be expected entirely to acquiesce, and it will require caution and consideration to estimate the comparative amount of support or damage which the old Reformation rite has sustained from the doubtful terms in which the charge against the appellant in regard to the eastward position, as we understand it, is treated as 'Not Proven.'" This is putting the case very mildly, but even if it were no worse, this means a defeat for the Evangelicals. Unless the eastward position is positively condemned, they are non-suited.

We are able to make allowances for a defeated party desirous of putting the best face on a bad matter, but at the same time it is well that the

Evangelicals should be made to understand the real state of the case. In one sense it may be said to have been a drawn battle, but that means a serious detriment to the Protestant cause within the Establishment. "We cannot (says the *Record*) affirm confidently that the Reformed Church of England has sustained no detriment; but we may acknowledge, with humble thankfulness to the great Head of the Church, that it has as yet received no deadly wounds." Talk of this kind provokes only the contempt and ridicule of opponents. We suppose that those who employ it will continue to indulge in the same strain until Protestants are absolutely driven out of the Establishment. But they forget that the object of the prosecution was not to secure immunity for themselves, but to expel from their Church those who are betraying the principles for the defence of which their Church has been established. No one has attempted to interfere with them since the time when the Bishop of Exeter attacked Mr. Gorham. The Ritualists are wiser in their generation than to seek the aid of law to accomplish what is being quietly effected without it. The process by which so many Evangelicals are drifting into High Church notions and practices is going on so satisfactorily, that it would be the height of folly for Ritualists to interfere. It is ridiculous, therefore, for Evangelicals to be thankful for a safety of which no one wishes to deprive them. Their enemies know that the surest way of extinguishing their party is to allow them to remain at peace in an Establishment the atmosphere of which is gradually poisoning their life-blood.



ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

THE discussions on the Burials Bill in the House of Lords, on the motion for going into Committee and in Committee itself, have an interest and suggestiveness altogether independent of the result attained. The results, indeed, are by no means significant, for the Government found itself on one occasion in a minority of five, and on the crucial amendment, that of the Earl of Harrowby, the Government was only saved from defeat by the custom of the House of Lords, under which a motion is lost when the votes for and against it are equal. The Bill that has to be reported to the House on June 18th, and which may yet undergo some modifications in the Report, is a very different one from that which, after having been read a second time, was referred to the Committee. The seventy-fourth clause, by which Dissenters were offered, in a spirit of Christian courtesy eminently characteristic of political Churchmen, the burial of the suicide and the excommunicate, has disappeared; and

had not the Primate succeeded in introducing a new clause, the measure would be a purely sanitary one. His amendment is two-fold, one-half of it providing an alternative service for unbaptized persons, while the other allows a clergyman to substitute some other form for the authorised service in cases where the friends of the deceased object to the latter, the approval of the bishop being required in both instances. The Earl of Harrowby's amendment would have conceded everything that Dissenters ask, except the recognition of the principle that the graveyards are the property of the nation and not of a sect. It provides that the relatives or other persons having charge of the funeral shall "be at liberty to inter the deceased with such Christian and orderly religious services at the grave as he may think fit, or without any religious service," and only restrains this freedom by an enactment that if anyone shall deliver an address "calculated to bring into contempt or obloquy the Christian religion, or the belief or worship of any Church or denomination of Christians, or the ministers or any minister of any such Church or denomination, he shall be held guilty of a misdemeanour." The great objection to these safeguards is that they would tend to develop the very evil against which they are directed. The proposal is not meant to be insulting, but it certainly implies that there is some danger of the offence against which it is thought necessary so distinctly to legislate—an insinuation which Dissenters would naturally resent. Under all circumstances it would be wiser to trust men who have not been in the habit of transgressing Christian courtesy, not to say common decency, in the manner which the prohibition suggests, and who are not at all likely to requite a concession made to them by a rude insolence that would be sure to recoil on their own heads. The safeguards proposed are unnecessary additions to those which public opinion would supply in the case of all right-minded men; and if there be others, it would be more expedient to put them on their honour, instead of erecting legal barriers which a little ingenuity would be able to overleap.

Still, it must be admitted that the practical grievance of Dissenters would be removed by the adoption of the clause. But the Bishop of Peterborough let fall some hints to which Nonconformists would do well to give heed: "Will the Dissenters who support this compromise deprive Her Majesty's subjects who are not Christians of privileges which are to be conferred on orthodox Nonconformists? I should be sorry to believe of them that all their religious equality is to be confined to religious Nonconformists; that when they level down they level no lower than themselves, and that when they demand equal rights of burial for all Her Majesty's subjects they have no intention of giving those rights to the unorthodox." The logic of the Prelate is un-

answerable, and though some may see in his arguments only the spirit of Mephistopheles, we are bound to confess that the reasoning is perfectly fair. We have no right to demand admission to these burial-grounds unless they are the property of the nation, and if they belong to the nation unbelievers must have the same rights in them as orthodox Nonconformists. Of course they would have to conform to any regulations which might be laid down ; and, provided these were such only as are necessary for public order and decency and applied fairly to all, there would be no just ground of complaint. That this mode of carrying out the principles of religious equality would be very unacceptable to the clergy, and that the Bishop meant to alarm the Peers with a red spectre when he insisted upon it as the legitimate consequence of any legal concession, we quite believe. But, after all, what is it that disturbs the clergy so much ? Surely the fact that there are those who live and die in open and avowed unbelief. That such should be interred with a ceremony which cannot in any sense be described as Christian, is a very secondary matter. They die, like other men, and must be buried. But, if so, with what rites ? It cannot be that the clergy would desire to read over them the words of faith and hope which they use at the burial of one who sleeps in Jesus. If they do, they are anxious to make themselves parties to a desecration far more deep than that which they deprecate so loudly. They are alarmed at the idea that the earth which the bishop has consecrated should be defiled by the presence of one who consigns the body of his deceased friend to the grave without a single thought about the God to whom he is gone to give account, or that the air which breathes around this sacred enclosure should be polluted by his words of unbelief ; but they do not seem disturbed at the violence which they must be forced to do their own consciences by thanking God for the hope they cherish in relation to one whose life has been one act of daring rebellion against Heaven.

It would be infinitely better if they frankly avowed that this is a question of right. We do not complain of the bishops and clergy for contesting our claim, which applies just as much to the churches as to the churchyards. What we have always doubted, and still doubt, is the expediency of converting the burial-ground into the battle-field on which the question is to be fought. The owner of the churchyard is the owner of the church also, and that owner, in our judgment, is the parish. But those who at present hold both church and graveyard, and contend that they are the private property of their Church, might, with equal grace and wisdom, have recognised that there is a marked distinction between the two, and have offered access to the churchyards on terms which would not have compromised their supposed rights of possession. Some of them see this now, and are offering concessions which, had they been

made ten or even five years ago, would have prevented the struggle from assuming its present character. Even now in tendering them they are never weary of drawing distinctions between religious and political Dissenters, to the disparagement of the latter. Possibly there may be some who will lay the flattering unction to their own souls, and, while accepting the boon which their calumniated brethren have won for them, thank God that they are not as these "political Dissenters," whose violence has so affected the hearts of those pious men who are so superior to all political ambition and separate from all political association—the bishops. If, however, these religious Dissenters look a little deeper, and have even the most elementary feeling of justice, not to say generosity, they must see that those who profess such affection and consideration for them never showed the slightest disposition to concede to them a single point until it had been enforced by their malignant political brethren. It is wonderful that sensible men are not tired of the twaddle in which Bishops and Church Peers indulge in relation to political Dissenters. Bishops, filling a place in a political assembly solely in virtue of a politician's will, and there making political speeches and wielding political power, ought, for very shame, to abstain from homilies against the sin of political Dissent. But as a sense of consistency will not restrain them, it is necessary to remind them that their talk only exposes themselves to ridicule. Political Dissenters will be political still, and all the world knows that however sincere may be the love of the Prelates and their friends for religious Dissenters, it is only these hated "politicals" who are able to extort a solitary right either for the one or the other.

To the Bishop of Lincoln we are indebted for a new light on the subject. His notion is that the grievance is a manufactured one, and that Nonconformists generally prefer the clergy and the ritual of the Establishment to their own ministers and their own service. If that be so, it would seem as though the best policy for the Bishops would be to grant the freedom asked, and thus hoist these grievance-engineers with their own petard. But his Lordship has an answer for this. Its *naïveté* is so perfect that we give it in his own words, only wondering where these wonderful people are to be found, and why they are Dissenters at all:—

"But, if the churchyards were open to other ministers and other services, it is probable that religious Dissenters would be coerced by *political* Dissenters (who desire the disestablishment of the Church on the plea of religious equality), and would be obliged to forego the services of the clergyman and of the Church, and to accept those of the Dissenting minister. If this is the case, the religious and conscientious Dissenter ought to be protected against a measure which would inflict a grievance not only on the clergy and laity of the Church, but on the best of our Nonconformist brethren, who love the services of the Church, and whose separation from us is

one rather of circumstances (especially lack of churches and clergymen) than of principle."

Clericalism has again shown itself to be a disturbing influence in European affairs. Suddenly France, which was enjoying a calm to which she has long been a stranger, and under which she was displaying a recuperative power that was a marvel to all Europe, has been plunged into fierce and angry excitement by a *coup d'état* due largely to priestly intrigues. How far the Ultramontanes were responsible for hurrying the country into the fatal war with Germany may still be open to question, but of their influence in producing the present crisis there can be no doubt. We do not, indeed, suppose that the Duc de Broglie and his associates are fired with a fanatical zeal for the Pope; but they see that Ultramontane priests may be useful allies in their crusade against popular liberty, and they have taken advantage of their irritation against the Republic, in the hope, by the union of their forces, that they may be able to overcome their hated foes. If, indeed, those who profit by a particular move may be credited with it, then Ultramontanes must accept the responsibility of the high-handed procedure of that "honest soldier" Marshal MacMahon, which has interrupted the peaceful development of France, scattered seeds of distrust in every Cabinet of Europe, and added a fresh complication to those which were previously disturbing the international relations of the Continent. The spectacle of confusion which is thus presented everywhere, so far from causing any distress to the clerical leaders, seems rather to afford them satisfaction, as it revives the hope that something may yet be done for the restoration of the temporal power of His Holiness. We have not space here to speak of the events which culminated in the dismissal of M. Simon, and to consider how far M. Gambetta and the Left are to be condemned for their strong anti-clerical spirit; there will be other opportunities for such a review. In the meantime, however, we must express our astonishment that the President and his advisers can find any sympathy in this country, and especially that so moderate a journal as the *Guardian* can try to stammer out half an excuse for him. We could desire for our clerical opponents nothing worse than that they should expose themselves even to the faintest suspicion of a covert sympathy with Ultramontanism, as though it could, in any true sense, be regarded as fighting the battles of religion. We trust, however, for the sake of our common Christianity, that none amongst us will supply the party of unbelief with so powerful an argument as the exhibition of any leaning towards the enemies of human right and freedom would furnish.

The feelings of King John when he received the startling news that the Lion was loose again, could hardly have been more uncomfortable

than those with which English Churchmen, and especially the bishops, must have learned from the papers of Monday, May 14, that Mr. Tooth was not only in England again, but at Hatcham, and had actually celebrated mass in his own church on the previous day. The exact purpose of this extraordinary apparition is not very obvious. We suppose that Mr. Tooth meant to enter his protest against the usurpation of his office by another; but we should have thought that he might have done this by some less violent and more seemly method than by breaking into the church, and summoning a number of his old parishioners and others, brought down specially for the purpose, to join him at an early communion. If he intended to show in the most daring way his utter defiance of the law, and to furnish a practical repudiation of the assertions of the *Pall Mall Gazette* as to the value of the Establishment in keeping the "English Ultramontanes" within bounds, he could not have done it more effectually; or if his intention was to irritate the triumphant Protestant league of Hatcham, and especially the churchwarden of their choice, his success was perfect. Still the question returns, *Cui bono?* That the object, whatever it was, was accomplished, may, we suppose, be inferred from the fact that no attempt was made to repeat the outrage (for it was nothing less) on the following Sunday. In the meantime, Mr. Tooth may be assured that such proceedings can only disgust all but the most violent partisans. The spectacle from first to last,—the entrance into the church in burglar fashion, the celebration of the Communion in defiance of the authorities both in Church and State, the unseemly brawl between the two churchwardens which interrupted the solemn service,—was a disgrace to religion itself. But what says the law to such proceedings? We hear rumours that the opinion of counsel is being taken; but if it had been a civil matter, we are satisfied there would have been no such delay in punishing such shameless disorder. Is there to be one law for the clergy, and another for the laity? And are we, in face of the manifest advantage which lawless priests enjoy in consequence of the exigencies of the Establishment, to be told that it is only by the condition of maintaining the present relations between Church and State that we can check a rampant sacerdotalism?

The Liberation Society has held its Triennial Conference during the past month, and it is to be congratulated on the spirit, the unanimity, and the success of the gathering. Whether it be judged by the number and character of the assembled delegates, or by the tone which pervaded the meetings, the gathering was full of encouragement and hope. There may have been more stir and excitement in connection with some previous conferences, but there never was one which showed more

intensity of conviction and more firmness of resolution, or which was more full of quiet confidence as to the issue. The depression which has fallen on a certain class of Liberal has evidently not affected the political Dissenters. They know their strength, and their faith in the principle for which they are contending saves them from impatience or despondency. The able report, read by Mr. Carvell Williams, was a gratifying record of progress, and progress at a time when it was least to be expected. The three past years have been years of political dearth and barrenness, or rather blight and desolation; but, notwithstanding this, the cause of religious equality has been making very decided advances, and occupies a position to-day very different from that which it held even three years ago. This was evident in the reception given to the practical suggestions for Disendowment, which were laid before the Conference by its members. In the absence of discussion, it would be foolish to speak positively as to the opinion formed of them; but it is tolerably clear that they have not produced the startling effect which they would certainly have done had they been made even less than three years ago. We cannot profess even to characterise them here. Suffice it to say, their leading idea is the recognition, in any scheme of compensation, of the rights of the laity. Vested rights are fully respected and life interests considered; but objection is taken to the appointment of a Church body with whom pecuniary arrangements are to be made by the State. It is with parishes and congregations that the nation is to deal, and only by their voluntary action are any churches or endowments to be disposed of. It is to be hoped that in provision will be found a sufficient safeguard against the increased this sacerdotalism which a certain party warn us must be the result of Disestablishment. A becoming tribute of respect was paid to Mr. Carvell Williams, who, after serving the Society for thirty years as secretary, is henceforth to take a position of more dignity and importance, and without responsibility for the fretting details of official work. Never was society better served than the siberation society has been by Mr. Carvell Williams. His work has been his passion, and nothing that a man of great organising and administrative ability, of considerable fertility of resource, and of indomitable energy, could do to make it a success, has been wanting. The society recognises the fidelity with which he has laboured for it by calling him to a higher service. Its Parliamentary work has been growing in importance, and demands even more exclusive attention than it has received. Mr. Williams' tact, judgment, and experience will find abundant employment in it, and while we cannot desire for him a long tenure of his new office, we hope it will be long enough for him to see the consummation of his cherished hopes.

The Congregational Union met this year for the first time under the presidency of a lay chairman, and as that chairman was Mr. Henry Richard, those of our readers who were not present will easily believe that the dignity and influence of the position were fully maintained. *Cela va sans dire.* The inaugural address was devoted to a review of the relations between Church and State, and while it was marked by all the characteristic force of our honoured friend, was rich in new and suggestive information. The Sessions have been unusually practical in character. The report of the Temperance Committee which was presented, was not very satisfactory, but it afforded the opportunity for some earnest appeals on one of the greatest questions of the day. We wish, however, that some more definite action had been taken. The iniquity of the opium traffic received a full share of attention; but had it not been for the brief and incisive speech of Dr. Mullens, the assembly would have been left without a clear view of the subject, and would not have fully realised the reasons for the strong protest in which it was invited to join. The greater part of Friday was given to the consideration of the aggressive work of our Churches, and the time was well employed. The more the Union is accustomed to conversational discussions of this kind, the freer and more valuable will they become, and less time will be wasted in desultory talk. One of the most remarkable scenes in the meeting was the extraordinary manifestation of sympathy with Mr. Gladstone. A similar demonstration had been made in the previous week, when the vast majority of those attending the Liberation Conference remained, after the business of the first morning was completed, to give their support to the great Liberal leader, and, in fact, to commence that wonderful movement, which, spreading with the rapidity of wildfire, called forth an expression of confidence in Mr. Gladstone which is without parallel in the history of our generation. The Congregational Union was equally full of ardent enthusiasm for a chief, whose lofty character has won for him the confidence even of a body which can have no sympathy with many of his theological and ecclesiastical ideas. Of course, all this has been as gall and wormwood to the *Pall Mall* and the clubs for which it caters; but it has told upon the country, and must affect the course of events.

BOOKS ON THE TABLE.

The Christian Hymnal,* recently published by Mr. Shaw, seems to us an excellent book. We are not favoured with the names of the editors, but it is plain that they possess the taste and judg-

* *The Christian Hymnal: Words and Music.* London: John F. Shaw. (Price 4s.)

ment required for the work they have taken in hand. The book contains 504 hymns and 340 tunes; and though we miss both hymns and tunes that we like and that we find elsewhere, yet there are very few in this selection that we ourselves should have wished to omit. We cannot fail to notice that one of the best hymn-writers of the present age, Mr. T. H. Gill, is not represented: perhaps this is not the fault of the editors. And perhaps their reasons are equally good for furnishing us with new settings for "Our blest Redeemer, 'ere He breathed," and for "Eternal Father, strong to save." Mr. Sullivan, in the substitute for the former, and Mr. Smart in that for the latter, have done well; but it is small blame to them that the old music still lingers in our ears. The hymns are Evangelical in doctrine, without narrowness, and the tunes have been selected from the best ancient sources, or contributed by the best modern composers. The new tunes are the composition of Messrs. Baker, Baptiste Calkin, Gauntlett, A. Sullivan, H. Smart, J. Tilleard, and C. E. Willing; and one of Bishop Turton's tunes has been published for the first time through the kindness of Mr. Turle. These names speak for themselves; and such tunes as Mr. Sullivan's "I heard the voice of Jesus say" and "Constance," and Mr. Willing's "Fairlight," prove that the composers have not sunk below their usual level. The tunes assigned to the children's hymns do not strike us as very bright or melodious, with the exception of H. Smart's "One in David's royal city," and a few that all children know.

MISS SMILEY'S *method* of interpretation in her little book on *Joshua*,* is, in our judgment, false and pernicious. She is a strong believer in the typical character of the Old Testament history. We are bound to say, however, that in the application of her method she shows that she possesses a cultivated mind and a deep knowledge of spiritual truth. There is a great deal of beautiful thought in her book.

The Editor has great pleasure in acknowledging the following contributions towards Mr. MCALL'S work in Paris:—

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James Fraser, Esq....
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* *The Fulness of the Blessing of the Gospel of Christ as illustrated from the Book of Joshua.* By SARAH F. SMILEY. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price 7s.)

The Congregationalist.

JULY, 1877.

THE GATHERING OF THE STORM.

THAT we are on the eve of a struggle of unusual intensity, in which the existence of the Anglican Establishment will be at stake, there are comparatively few who doubt. Attempts at adjustment will undoubtedly be made; various compromises will be proposed; ecclesiastical dignitaries on both sides will show themselves anxious for settlement; Erastian optimists will eagerly catch at every hint of concession on either side, and will be ready to prophesy peace at the very moment when war is about to break out;—but not the less certain does it become every day that a decisive conflict is approaching. The situation at present is very like that of the Eastern Question during the wearisome negotiations of last year, and especially during the Conference, when we were tantalised by incessant changes in the political barometer, notes and protocols following one another in rapid succession, each one being ushered in with more pretension and promise than its predecessor, merely to be in its turn discredited by more complete and ignominious failure, and the only effect of the whole being to embitter the struggle which they delayed, but could not avert. There are always a number of weak and well-meaning individuals who fancy that even the most serious differences may be arranged by some clever process of *legerdemain*. They are great in vague phrases, which seem to be happy because everyone can adopt them, for the very obvious reason that, as they have no definite meaning, everyone may attach to them the sense which best suits his own purpose, and if no practical results are to follow, there may be an apparent accommodation of differences which may last for a time, even though the real points at issue in the controversy remain untouched.

Diplomatists of this kind, who are supposed to have a happy knack of untying Gordian knots, and of ending discussions in such a way as to delude everyone into the belief that his own view has been triumphant, are to be found both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs. Probably they are more abundant even in the Church than the State, from the fact that the controversies in the former have relation to principles, which those for whom they have no special attraction regard as mere strifes about words, and expect therefore to settle by some ingenious manipulation of words.

We have in England to-day a number of people who cling so tenaciously to the Church Establishment that, in its service, they will bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things. That this should be the feeling of Archbishops and Bishops is not surprising. They must be ungrateful, indeed, if they did not earnestly contend for an institution to which they owe a position of such influence and distinction. A Primate has his anxieties and cares, but the Establishment makes him the first subject in the realm, that is, it gives a Christian minister, who, whatever his gifts or graces, his eloquence or his industry, would but for its favour be only a humble member of the State, precedence over the proudest dukes and oldest earls of England's aristocracy. It would be surprising if he did not believe a national recognition of religion which takes such a form to be an exceedingly good thing, and were not intensely anxious to preserve it. It requires no little resolution and conscientiousness for a Bishop to take even so cheerful a view of the possibilities of Disestablishment as the Bishop of Ely has reached, and to tell his clergy that it were better to face them than endure some other evils with which they are threatened. There are few Prelates, indeed, who will reach this point. The great majority will be desirous rather to minimise the evils whose evidence they cannot absolutely deny, to resort to any or every expedient which holds out any hope of preserving an institution they love so well, to ignore dangers until they have proved themselves too formidable to be trifled with, and in general to cultivate that Olympian style of confidence and self-assertion which mask the secret fears that must disturb the peace even of Erastian Prelates. They will also always have a considerable number of supporters, both among those who think that the Alpha and Omega of religion is respectability, and that a Church would be nothing if not dignified and moderate, and those who regard an Establishment, with a hierarchy and clergy whose instincts are necessarily Conservative, as a valuable help to the aristocratic party in the country. Politicians who have been accustomed to shout in favour of our glorious constitution in Church and State; literary cynics who hate religious enthusiasm, and look upon the Establishment as the most effectual instrument for suppressing it; sincere Erastians who con-

scientifically believe that Arnold's ideas of a Church-State is a true and noble one, and do not care to inquire how far it is realised in the State-Church of this country; plutocrats who have identified themselves with the fortunes of the institution by heavy investments in the advowson market,—will all be eager to patch up any compromise that will quiet the opposing parties, even though it be only for a time, and, as every new suggestion is started, loudly to proclaim that all difficulties are at an end.

There has been a very singular and amusing illustration of these remarks during the past month. In the first flush of the excitement produced by the Folkestone decision, it seemed as though Mr. Ridsdale were bent on fighting a good fight. He had stood forth in defence of what he proclaimed to be a great principle, and it seemed as though he was determined to stand by it. The Court to which he had appealed had pronounced against him, but he was the subject of an authority superior to that of any secular tribunal, and by it he must be governed. He announced, therefore, in the most solemn manner, and with a parade of what he was pleased to consider argument, and a display of considerable feeling, that he must obey God, speaking through His Church, rather than man as represented by the Judicial Committee. The State forbade him to wear the sacrificial vestments,—the Church, in his interpretation of its law, required him to retain the use of them. He had no option but to obey the latter, unless he were dispensed from the obligation he had incurred. This seems to have been a sufficient opening for the Primate, who appears to be much more careful about the peace of the Establishment than the doctrine and practice of the Church. It is hardly credible that he should have any special anxiety as to the robes which Mr. Ridsdale may choose to wear. To a cool and clear-headed man like Dr. Tait, their symbolic character alone can invest them with any importance, and if so, it must be a small matter whether or not the Folkestone Vicar or any other clergyman wears them. It is the pretensions of the priest, of which they are the "outward and visible sign," which are to be dreaded and if possible put down. If not, the whole struggle is one of the most childish and contemptible about which human intellects were ever engaged, or human passion ever awakened. Yet Dr. Tait was content to allow the substance to remain, provided he could get rid of the obnoxious symbol. The great point was to induce Mr. Ridsdale to lay aside the Popish garments, which attracted public observation and provoked Protestant criticism and hostility, and if that was done he might still continue to preach Popish doctrine and to exercise priestly influence.

Whether Mr. Ridsdale had any idea of the interposition of the Primate when he made his passing reference to a dispensation may be doubtful.

At all events, it was enough for his Grace. On the hint he spoke, and his speech was so satisfactory, that the resolute priest, who so recently had been willing to defy all the power of the law, yielded to the voice of this new charmer. How the Archbishop acquired the right to be considered the "living voice of the Church" is not manifest, but his letter had all this power and virtue for Mr. Ridsdale. It is a great pity that he had not thought of consulting his diocesan before, for Dr. Tait is too anxious for peace to have any scruple about accepting any responsibility which his clergy are willing to commit to him. Dispensations from him could never have been difficult to obtain if there was any chance that they would produce any effect. But it must have been as great a surprise to himself as it certainly has been to all the rest of the world, to find that they are such potent instruments for satisfying the consciences of too scrupulous Ritualist priests. It is clear that the spirit of these good clergymen has been misunderstood, and that their censors ought to recant many of the condemnations which they have passed upon them. They have been charged with excessive independence, trenching even on arrogance. They have been supposed to care only for Episcopacy in the abstract, and to be extremely contemptuous of the authority, even of their own Bishops, when it crossed their path. But there has been some egregious mistake, due probably to the unwillingness of the right reverend fathers to assert their power. Their lordships have at least this excuse for their reluctance. The journals which are understood to represent these gentlemen have been so profuse in their abuse of the Bench, that it might reasonably have been thought that any attempt to assert their power would only provoke bitter insults. Mr. Ridsdale has shown that, in his case at least, there was nothing but an eager anxiety to obey. His diocesan was to him more than Lord Penzance, more than the Judicial Committee, more than all the tribunals and all the law of the land. Nay, greatly as he detested Lord Penzance's rule, much as he disapproved of the judgment of the Privy Council, and prepared though he was to prove its unsoundness, he would, nevertheless, submit to both, as thus his Bishop willed it. When have we had so edifying an example of loyal obedience as this? When has a party been so shamefully misjudged, if Mr. Ridsdale be a fair illustration of its spirit? It is true that Mr. Ridsdale reserves the rights of Convocation, and if that venerable body should condemn the action of the Primate, we suppose he will turn round once more and assume the vestments. But that is not a contingency to be seriously contemplated, and we may therefore suppose that St. Peter's, Folkestone, will have to be content to see its priest in the surplice, once, as much lauded by Ritualists as now it is heartily despised. What is to come of the congregation who are thus to be put off with maimed rites we know not.

In some cases much has been made of their grievance, but here, it seems, the priest is to do as he will.

What a wonderful triumph is this to secure ! The ten Judges, who spent so much of their precious time in listening to the learned speeches of counsel, or in elaborating their own ingenious decision, may take heart, for they have not worked in vain ! The business of their separate Courts may have been interrupted ; the suitors who have been kept waiting may have chafed still more indignantly under the proverbial delays of the law ; they may themselves have somewhat compromised their own character as interpreters of the law, in their desire to prove themselves wise counsellors of the State ; they have certainly drawn upon their own devoted heads an amount of abuse, such as, happily, English judges seldom have to encounter. But, verily, they have their reward. Mr. Ridsdale has laid aside alb, tunicle, and chasuble ! It is true their satisfaction may be a little dashed when they remember that he still continues to preach all that these garments were intended to symbolise, that he has not abjured a single priestly claim, nor abandoned one iota of the sacramental superstitions he has been accustomed to set forth, and to which these robes were meant to bear testimony ! It is true, also, that Mr. Ridsdale has yielded not to the judges, but to his own Bishop, and so far as it appears, therefore, all their labour has been superfluous—as utter a waste of time and thought and energy as though they had occupied themselves in preparing a discourse on the Pandects of Justinian ! But these are mere cavilling objections. The work is done, Mr. Ridsdale is stripped of his Babylonish garments, and has humiliated himself, if he has not humiliated his party. What good Protestantism will get we are too dull to perceive. But, at all events, the triumph has been won, and the satisfaction of Mr. Ryle and the Church Association is complete. Let the Judges be comforted. The Evangelicals are jubilant. Even had a different verdict been given, they would doubtless have found even in defeat some reason for gratitude, but now that they have got, or think they have got, a victory, their rejoicings should be a recompense to those whose decision has produced them, and who, of course, are entitled to the gratitude of all who wish well to the nation and the Protestant faith. For ourselves, we can only think of Southey's ballad—

“ ‘Great praise the Duke of Marlboro’ won,
 And our good Prince Eugene.’
 ‘Why, t’was a very wicked [stupid] thing,’
 Said little Wilhelmine.
 ‘Nay, nay, my little girl,’ quoth he,
 ‘It was a glorious victory :

'And everybody praised the Duke,
 Who such a fight did win.'
 'But what good came of it at last?'
 Quoth little Peterkin.
 'Why, that I cannot tell,' said he,
 'But t'was a famous victory.'"

But even the *Times* was so carried away by the remarkable change of situation as to indulge in confident vaticinations of the future. A passing qualm, indeed, seems to have troubled it as to the contemptuous style in which the law had been treated, and the participation of the Primate in the indignity put upon it and its administrators. But that was only momentary, for any disrespect to the State could not be allowed to weigh in the balance against the possibility of ending an agitation so mischievous as that in which the High Anglican party has recently been engaged. The leading journal was evidently buoyed up with the hope that Mr. Ridsdale would find many imitators, as anxious for peace, as eager to find some mode in which they might extricate themselves from an embarrassing position, as ready to palm off some plausible sophistry upon their conscience. "There are," it says, "probably not a few well-intentioned gentlemen who have got themselves into a difficulty like Mr. Ridsdale's, without quite knowing what they were about, and who would be glad to have a bridge built for their decent retreat; and though it might be hard to say exactly to what the Archbishop's dispensing power amounts, it will be left unchallenged provided it produce such salutary effects." That is, to put it plainly, the end will sanctify the means, and if the Establishment can be preserved and peace restored, it will neither be necessary nor expedient to look too closely at the means by which it has been effected. The Ritualists want humouring, and as it might be dangerous to irritate them any further at present, they must be fooled to the top of their bent, even though in the process some of the most precious rights for which Englishmen have always stoutly contended, be seriously compromised, if not wholly surrendered.

This is a mode of dealing with great principles to which we have not been accustomed, and which it is not possible for us to regard with any complacency. The assumption of a "dispensing power" by the Primate is no light matter, and its gravity is not at all abated by the vagueness by which it is surrounded. The reason of Dr. Tait's interference to save Mr. Ridsdale from the consequences of his folly is not quite intelligible; but its method is open to the gravest objection. The Archbishop, when he made his celebrated speech on the second reading of the Public Worship Act, seemed full of alarm as to the proceedings of the Romanising conspirators

in the Establishment. There has certainly been nothing in what has occurred since to abate that anxiety, and if it still exists, it might have been thought that his Grace would have been only too satisfied to see one of the traitors expelled from the citadel. The disuse of the vestments does not imply any recantation of principles or any change of purpose. On the contrary, it is so done as to make the Archbishop himself an accessory after the fact to the rebellious priest's insolent defiance of the law. Even in his submission, Mr. Ridsdale secures a triumph and humiliates his diocesan. The vestments can only be regarded as a mere accident of the controversy. The *Saturday Review* has hunted up from the musty records of the Tractarian discussions of 1844, a very singular statement made by a Mr. Phillipps, a county magistrate of strong anti-Tractarian views, at a meeting at Torquay. The report says: "He commented with much force upon the fallacy of the argument for the surplice from the rubrics; the garments there enjoined are an alb, a vestment (that is a chasuble), and a cope." The worthy man is hardly to be blamed for not foreseeing that the love of the surplice would so soon give place to the desire for the more gorgeous robes which, as he innocently said, were enjoined by the rubrics, still less that his own Evangelical friends would themselves adopt the robe against which he was so ingeniously arguing. The incident itself is eminently suggestive. It is certainly a very significant comment on the recent Judgment, and as such is certain to be quoted by the Ritualists, who will be glad enough to find an ally in this eloquent denouncer of Tractarianism. But there is another side to it, and it is that which specially affects us here. If the Ritualists could content themselves with the surplice and even fight for it thirty years ago, it can involve no serious sacrifice of principle for them to use the same robe now. They may have been extremely stupid in insisting on other vestments, and it may be mortifying to lay them aside; but if, in consenting to do it, they can make an Archbishop tacitly encourage their most monstrous assumptions, there is abundant compensation for the sacrifice. This is what they have actually done. Mr. Ridsdale has consented to do what the Supreme Court has enjoined, but only on condition that the Primate shall make it the decision of the Church as well, by setting up the idea of a dispensing power.

What is this power but a distinctly priestly prerogative, and what has the Archbishop done but practically assume the very control for the Church in the person of himself as its representative, which the Ritualists, and indeed High Churchmen generally, assert for it? It is true that the power in the present instance is used for ends which the *Times*, as an organ of Erastian Protestantism, would approve. Yet surely even here it is in the highest degree objectionable that an Archbishop

should throw his ægis over a recalcitrant priest and enable him to escape from that proper submission to the law which was required at his hands. It may appear a clever piece of tactics to use the power of the Church to sustain that of the State, but the practical outcome is that Mr. Ridsdale is enabled to boast that he has defied the Court, and only abandoned his attitude of resistance when his Bishop allowed and even commanded him to do so.

Nor must it be forgotten that the power now used to uphold the action of the law may, on the next occasion, be put forth in the opposite direction. In all the great struggles for liberty in the past, Englishmen have not been thus careless as to the nature of any new power which it was proposed to call into existence, simply because its first exercise was wise and expedient. The dispensing power of James II. would have been employed first in favour of liberty; but the Non-conformists of his day refused to accept even the rights of which they had been so cruelly deprived, if they could only be obtained by allowing despotism to forge a weapon which might be used for repression as well as freedom. Their conduct is a lesson for the present time, and we can hardly conceive that the *Times* would have been oblivious of its application to the wants of the present day, if the peril of the Establishment had not been so serious as to lead its defenders to catch at any expedient which holds out even a faint hope of its extrication. It is, however, a very heavy price to pay if we have to allow Dr. Tait to become a High Priest in order to save Anglican Protestantism. This certainly is *perdere vitam propter causas vivendi*.

But is it at all probable that the hopes of the *Times* will be fulfilled? The Evangelicals, certainly, will not frustrate them, for they seem desirous to rest on their laurels, and, having secured a decision of the law in their favour, to leave the Ritualists at liberty to defy it. Most of the Bishops will do their best to effect a Concordat, and, indeed, some of them do not conceal their intention to interpose their veto on any proposals for prosecutions. But will the Ritualists be as facile and compliant as is assumed? They will certainly discover an entirely new spirit if they do not take advantage of the evident fears of their adversaries to prosecute their own designs. They must be blind if they do not perceive that they hold the key of the position, and they must have lost their resolution and audacity if they fail to use the strength which they thus possess. The manner in which the action of Mr. Ridsdale has been received by the *Church Times* does not indicate any such faltering, or hold out any prospect that the bridge which the Primate has built will be extensively used. It looks as though we were to have a renewal of what we have lately seen in the case of Russia. Three months ago we were incessantly told that the Czar had entangled him-

self in a position from which he was anxious to escape, and attempt after attempt was made to build a bridge by which he might retreat, until at last it became apparent that the assumed wish on which so many speculations had been based had never any reality. It appears as if it were the same with the Ritualists. The proposals for making their escape easy are, to say the least, premature, until they themselves show that they are willing to lower their colours if a way be found in which their honour may be saved. There is no sign of it in the defiant tone adopted by the *Church Times* in the following observations :—

“The controversy, so far as St. Peter’s is concerned, has come to an end. From one point of view, the catastrophe is not devoid of a certain touch of humour ; for we have the Archbishop, an Erastian of the Erastians, coming forward to aid and abet Mr. Ridsdale in his resolve to set ‘the law’ at defiance. The collapse of the case is utter ruin and defeat for the most rev. Prelate ; his Grace having, in effect, admitted that Privy Council ‘law’ cannot be enforced, and having invented a mode by which it may be evaded. But this difficulty remains—we object to have the Ornaments Rubric abolished by the Privy Council, and we do not see what we gain if we allow it to be done by the Primate ; regard being always had to his Grace’s manifest hankering after Presbyterianism. At the same time, treating St. Peter’s as an isolated case, we shall not be sorry to have demonstrated to the Persecution Company the utter folly of supposing that it can touch the Catholic movement by procuring the suppression of this or that detail of ritual. The Westerton aggression was stopped by its very success at St. Barnabas, for people found that when they had done their worst, the difference it made was not discernible except by experts who had very sharp eyes. We entertain no manner of doubt that before many weeks have passed we shall have a chorus of complaints about the utter uselessness of all that has been effected through the interference of worthy Mister Clifton, the baker. In the meantime, we hope that as the burden of the day has now fallen upon the laity, they will make up in the nave for what has been lost in the chancel. For instance, they may kneel the whole time that the Sacrament is on the altar and genuflect both when they leave their seats to communicate and when they return.”

The meaning of this cannot be mistaken. It is something more than a cry of “No surrender.” It is rather an exultant shout over the surrender of Bishops and others to the Ritualists. These sacerdotal conspirators will not disturb the Establishment if they are allowed to pursue their own devices within it. They will obey the Bishops if their Lordships will order them to do only what is congenial to their own tastes, and accordant with their own convictions. They are innocent of all evil intentions against others ; if they insist on the establishment of a legislative power within the Church it is only in self-defence. But they are fully resolved to maintain the position they have taken. Lord Penzance and all his works they abhor, and to him they will not be brought into subjection for an hour. The Judicial Committee is equally

objectionable, and to its decrees they will render no obedience—at all events until the Church, by its own action, has given them an independent authority. If peace can be restored on these terms, that is, by their tacitly-acknowledged victory all along the line, they will interpose no obstacles ; but as to securing it by any concession on their part, the thought is one of the last which they seem at all likely to entertain.

The tone of the *Church Times* is that which prevailed at the annual meeting of the "E. C. U." Some of the speakers, indeed, displayed a more pacific spirit, and, it might seem, were half disposed to retreat from the advanced ground previously taken up. This is perfectly easy to understand, without supposing that there is any real faltering on the part of the more pronounced leaders of the Union. Of course such a body, which is not to be regarded as composed wholly, or even chiefly, of the extreme section of High Churchmen, includes many who must have been greatly staggered by the strong resolutions passed in the case of Mr. Tooth, and who, though unwilling to separate themselves from their friends, or to run the risk of weakening their protest against Lord Penzance, and his Court, and the Act by which it was created, are ready enough to snatch at any overtures which may seem to open a way of conciliation. The present is just a fitting opportunity for men of this type to reveal their secret wishes. So far from having any leaning towards Disestablishment, they regard it at best only as a *pis-aller* to which they would only have recourse under the pressure of absolute necessity. It is not all High Churchmen who have the logical consistency, or the penetrating insight, or the manly courage shown by Mr. Mossman, or the lofty spirit and uncompromising loyalty to his convictions seen in Archdeacon Denison, or the unhesitating faith, the absolute devotion to the cause of "Catholicity," and the undoubting assurance of its triumph expressed by Mr. Mackonochie in his very significant article in the *Nineteenth Century*. Nor are those to be harshly judged who cling tenaciously to the Establishment. They have not only been educated amid its surroundings, but they are conscientiously attached to its principles, and they are not to be severely condemned if they hesitate to venture into a state of freedom of which they have had no experience, and which hitherto they have regarded with doubt and distrust. We are not surprised that they should be anxious, as one speaker put it, to try readjustment before Disestablishment ; that Mr. Berdmore Compton should say, "Let us have one more try to preserve the property of God," or that the Rev. T. W. Perry should thank the *Times* for a "message of peace" in a leader which we should have expected to produce only a keen resentment of the contemptuous tone which it adopted. This last utterance surprised us most, because it shows what we were not at all prepared for, that there are Ritualists who are as

ready to submit to snubs as the Evangelicals themselves. But the speaker seems to have been carried away by the idea that both the *Times* and the Church Association were beginning to see the peril of the Public Worship Regulation Act, and by his anxiety to help in the process of enlightenment.

Still, despite this and other manifestations, the meeting of the "E. C. U." gives no hope of peace by submission. There may be a lull in the agitation which was so violent in the spring, but there is no evidence of any intention to withdraw the demands then made. Aristocratic leaders like the Hon. C. L. Wood—an hereditary Whig, who carries the spirit of the party in whose traditions he was trained into ecclesiastical affairs—may fancy that he sees a chance of one of those pleasant compromises for the arrangement of which his father had so high a reputation and may think "that out of this action of the Archbishop's some possible concordat may arise, some possible compromise may be effected of the kind so dear to the English mind;" but it is not to leaders like him that we are to look for a full expression of the will of the party. This is just one of the cases in which a party is tolerably sure to be led by its tail. At least, if the rank and file are determined on extreme and positive action, they can easily override any cautious scruples on the part of the nominal chiefs, who can only occupy their position so long as they pander to the strong feelings of followers who would have no hesitation in displacing them if they grew feeble and uncertain, to make way for stronger men. Ritualists are not in the habit of being influenced by great names, or even by the memory of distinguished services in the past, and they are not very likely to pay much respect to a chief who can hardly be said to bring their cause much intellectual power, or, indeed, much beyond social status, if he should show a reluctance to lead. But if the President of the Union was able to carry out his views they would really have nothing to object to. The compromise at which he hints is all on one side. He asks the Bishops to turn the Public Worship Act into a dead letter, and treat the recent suit before the Privy Council as an entertaining farce which was got up for the gratification of too anxious Evangelicals, but which, having effected its purpose, should not be allowed to have any more serious results. The two altar lights are to be left burning, the sacrificial vestments are to be continued; in fact, every contested point is to be allowed to the Ritualists, and then he tells the Bishops, "we will rally round you an enthusiasm of which at present you can form no idea." That must be a most agreeable prospect to Bishops who are accustomed to the scurrilous lampoonings of Ritualists, but the price to be paid for it is considerable. The picture which Mr. Wood draws of a future in which the "E. C. U." shall be placed absolutely in the hands of the

Bishops, who shall at last be acknowledged as the only "Divinely-appointed guides and rulers of the Church," is wonderfully graphic, and must be attractive to those who have been accustomed to such different treatment. But then, before it is realised, their Lordships are to "show themselves to be true shepherds of the flock committed to their charge, not merely officers of a great State establishment." For ourselves, we must confess it hard to predict what the Hon. C. L. Wood means to do. That he would prefer peace is clear, but that very preference only makes it the more ominous that he never suggests that his own friends should surrender a single point in order to obtain it, and that even in his appeal to the Bishops he has a quiet fling at their subserviency to the State.

We do not say that High Churchmen will not yield, but we do say that they are continually committing themselves in such a way as will make subsequent submission far more difficult. Mr. Ridsdale's ignominious surrender, following so close upon his previous defiance, may reasonably excite a suspicion as to the fibre of which the party is made. But we must not forget that if there is a Ridsdale there is also a Tooth, and we have no means of deciding which of them is the truest representative of the mass of the party. If we were to judge from the exhibitions of feeling at the "E. C. U.," there can be no doubt on the point. But it is natural that all men should show more respect to a martyr than to one who fights and runs away that he may fight another day. Whether in the time of trial the majority who gave Mr. Tooth such an ovation would follow his example, is another question. But it is necessary to find prosecutors as well as defendants, and it would seem as though these would not be forthcoming. Certain it is there is a dread of provoking another excitement such as that caused by the imprisonment of Mr. Tooth. It not only irritated the clergy, but it made a much wider and more profound impression on a large circle beyond, including many who might not be thought to take any deep interest in the question. We happened recently to meet a Tory M.P. of very decided opinions, and began chaffing him about the possibility of his conversion to Liberalism. At first he laughed; but presently he put on a more serious air, and said, "Ah! if there were one or two more Toths, many of us would turn Liberals." Of course Bishops know the existence of this kind of feeling, and are very anxious to avoid prosecutions altogether, hoping that if the prosecutions are not renewed, the opposition to the law may die out.

But there are two difficulties in the way of an issue which would be so agreeable to those who care more for peace than for Protestantism, and more for the Establishment itself than for the ends for which it professedly exists. The first is the intense feeling which has been awakened in the

minds of the clergy, and which is shown far more in the moderate utterances of the pacific *Guardian* than in the bellicose attitude and fierce defiance of the *Church Times*,—in the weighty utterances of a veteran clothed with such high authority as Dr. Pusey, or in the chivalrous if not always very measured declarations of one who, like Mr. Oakley, has been supposed to be as nearly allied to the Broad as to the High Church, than in the passionate declamation of men like Mr. Tooth. The resentment of the interference of the State with the spiritual affairs of the Church has both intensity and extension. Bishops like Dr. Harold Browne and Dr. Woodford feel almost as deeply as Canon Carter or Mr. Mackonochie. Wherever it is felt it inspires a longing for autonomy, in which even the *Guardian* sympathises, for it says: "The present crisis cannot pass, and ought not to pass, without an attempt to remedy the indefensible anomaly of the present position of the Church."

It is here, however, that the second difficulty arises. What Churchmen say they want and must have, the nation is determined not to give. The notion of a Church enjoying at once spiritual independence and temporal wealth and honour conferred by the State, has long been a dream of high ecclesiastics; but it is one which was never less likely to be realised than in England in the nineteenth century. With the spectacle of Ultramontaniam as it works abroad, the nation will not brook its development at home. The feeling against it has, if possible, been made still more intense by the revelations of Lord Redesdale as to the teachings of the Society of the Holy Cross, in the manual it has provided for Anglican confessors in the infamous book entitled the "Priest in Absolution." That the nation will not allow these priests more freedom than they at present possess is certain, and if they are bent on asserting it, we see not what is to avert a storm, the first result of which will be the overthrow of the Establishment.



HOW TO GET GOOD CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.

GOOD congregational singing may be described as that in which all the people unite, and in which they find it easy and delightful to unite; that which helps to express the devout feelings of the worshippers, and to impress the minds and warm the hearts of those who engage in it; that which adds the charm and power of music to the beauty of the poetry and the devotional sentiments of the psalms and hymns we sing. That such psalmody as this, though eminently to be desired, is far from being universal, we suppose will be generally and sadly admitted. It must often have been observed in places of worship that the singing of

the choir is one thing, and the singing of the congregation is another, and altogether a different, thing. The singing of the choir is vigorous, harmonious, and marked by the precision and confidence of those who come prepared for their work, and who know that they are singing correctly; the singing of the congregation is not seldom strikingly deficient in these characteristics. It is far from being uncommon that the voices of a dozen or a score of singers in a choir are distinctly audible above the voices of the hundreds of the congregation; not because the choir sing too loud, but on account of the feebleness of the singing of the people. The harmonies of the choir are often so prominently and clearly heard, as to show that they are almost if not quite the only harmonies that are being sung. Where such a difference between the singing of a choir and of a congregation is found to exist, its main cause, in all probability, is that the members of the choir use tune-books and sing their proper parts, while the members of the congregation generally do not. Choirs are accustomed to sing in harmony. The treble, alto, tenor, and bass parts of the music are generally distinctly rendered by them. It is often the case, however, that the singing of congregations is, for the most part, unisonous, with some admixture of harmony and some proportion of discord.

A question of fundamental importance is, in what way is it desirable that congregations should sing, in unison or in harmony? Shall the people make one sound,—all singing the air of a tune,—or shall they be expected to produce harmony, to sing the different parts of the music, as is done by the choir? Unison-singing can be secured without the use of tune-books; harmony-singing cannot. In the production of harmony both nature and art are concerned. Harmony-singing is natural, inasmuch as it is based upon certain natural laws, the laws of harmony, and upon the natural varieties of the human voice, by which we are enabled to sing in parts. The notes of the common chord are not man's invention, but the gracious appointment of God; and the four varieties of voice which enable us to sing in harmony are God's good gift to His creatures, for their solace and delight. Of men's voices there are the high and the low, fitting them respectively to sing the tenor and the bass melodies of a tune; and of women's and children's voices there are also the high and the low, fitting them for the treble and the alto parts of the music; the singing together of these four parts constitutes perfect harmony. But art as well as nature is concerned in the production of harmony-singing. While two individuals may easily sing in harmony without the use of notes, the singing of a number of persons together, even if only two-part harmony be attempted, will not be found easy; but for a congregation to sing in four or even in three-part harmony without the guidance of notes is simply im-

possible. The same tune may be found differently harmonised in almost every tune-book we open. Even such a standard tune as the Old Hundredth was found, on comparing twenty tune-books, to have seventeen different basses, the tenor and alto melodies were different in each of the twenty books, even the air had two varieties, and the tune was set in five varieties of time! Everyone knows how common it is to hear one man in a congregation singing the bass part of a tune which he has learned from one book, and another singing the bass which he has learned from another book, and another constructing a bass of his own, and all these perhaps different from the bass which is sung by the choir. If these different basses should be sung loudly and near together, painful discord would be produced; but generally these attempts at harmony are made quietly, and are graciously covered by the unisons around, and so they fail to offend. But if they fail to offend, they fail also to delight. Why is the harmony-singing of a choir pleasing to the ear? Because the bass voices sing the same notes, as do also the singers of the other parts. But the attempts at harmony made in a congregation which does not use tune-books, produce only a blurred confusedness of sound, even if they escape distressing discord.

One evil effect of such a state of things is the prevention of heartiness in congregational singing. The air of many, if not most, of the tunes generally used will be found to reach higher notes than can be easily sung by the low voices of a congregation,—commonly numbering about half of the assembly. What are these low voices to do when the tune goes up beyond their reach? Shall they be silent, or sing some notes below the air? Frequently they attempt the latter; they compose a harmony, but their ears so often tell them that they are not singing the same bass and the same alto as others around them, that they sing softly. Many, however, remain silent, and in either case the heartiness of the singing is impaired. If half the members of a congregation cannot sing with the comfort and confidence resulting from the consciousness of correctness, feebleness must be the necessary result.

Unison-singing has been advocated as best for congregations, on account of its easiness in comparison with harmony-singing. It is said that musical education has been so neglected in our country, that the people are unable to read notes and sing parts, and that it is better, therefore, that they should all join in rendering the principal melody of the tunes they sing, that they should all sing the air—the tune itself—and thus unite in producing one sound. It is admitted that congregational singing would doubtless be much sweeter and richer if it were harmonious instead of unisonous, but it is said the difficulties are so great in the way of training the people to the use of notes and to singing in parts, that it is better to cut the knot instead of attempting to untie it,

and let unison-singing be the rule of our psalmody. Some advocate the singing of harmonies by the choir; others would confine the rendering of harmonies to the organ. In either case, the mass of the people are to sing unisons. Now, if a congregation chooses to adopt this method of singing, let them understand what it involves. The low voices of the assembly, amounting perhaps to half of the whole, cannot be expected to sing higher than the upper D; and tunes in which C and D often occur will be more wearisome to them than tunes in which lower notes are more frequent. But what is the fact with regard to the tunes commonly used in public worship? They often go up to D[#], E, F, F[#], and sometimes even to G. Now, if unison-singing be the rule of a congregation, no tunes should be used which go higher than D. All music which goes above this note must be excluded, or be sung in a lower key. Of the first fifty tunes in a certain popular tune-book, we have observed that forty go above D in the treble part.

For a unison-singing congregation most, if not all, of our present tune-books would be unsuitable. If the organist played harmonies, he would have to transpose the arrangements of most of the tunes; and if the choir set themselves to sing harmonies, they would find it impossible to sing the present arrangements, in the lower key to which many of the tunes would have to be brought in order to bring the air within the range of the voices of the people. And then the questions arise, Would a congregation be satisfied to sing only unisons? And could they be got to do it? We believe both of these questions would have to be answered in the negative. Unison-singing is poor and bald in comparison with harmony; and if the experiment were tried, we suspect that the result would be that, if the choir sang harmonies, some of the congregation would try to imitate them, and if only the organ produced harmony, some of the people would be found making a harmony of their own. But even if the attempt were successful, would it be a worthy one? In so glorious an engagement as that of praising God—the most exalted in which we can unite—is the easiest way of doing it on that account the best? Shall the maxim, “The best for God” be accepted as right in everything besides the manner in which we praise Him in His house? In the songs of the sanctuary we come nearer to the worship of heaven than in any other parts of our services; and is it fitting that these shall be performed in a slovenly, unsatisfactory manner because this is easy, and a nearer approach to perfectness and beauty is difficult? Is this to sing with the spirit and with the understanding also? Shall our aim be to offer to the Lord that which costs us nothing? Is this to make His praise glorious?

By establishing the laws of harmony as He has done, and constructing our vocal organs in accordance therewith, God has fitted us for singing

in harmony ; and shall we ignore this kind intention, and in His own worship—the noblest exercise in which our voices can be employed—shall we despise His goodness by refusing to accept and enjoy it? No. As the Psalmist would “play skilfully,” so should we aspire to sing skilfully unto the Lord. As Rowland Hill is reported to have said, “he did not see why the devil should have the best tunes,” so we may be allowed to object to the world’s having the best music.

There are places of worship where tune-books are almost as plentifully used as hymn-books, and where the sweetness of harmony is everywhere heard ; where the psalmody thrills one with delight ; where the sentiments of psalms and hymns are fittingly and forcibly expressed by the varied manner in which they are rendered ; where plaintive and sorrowful words are softly and tenderly sung ; where joyful thanksgiving and praise are pealed forth in jubilant and triumphant strains ; where the soul is lifted up, and one feels that it is indeed a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises to the Most High. Such psalmody as this is the fruit of earnest and loving effort ; and wherever it exists it is felt to be a blessing of priceless worth.

The abstract propriety of part-singing in our services we are not called upon to argue, inasmuch as it is generally admitted and adopted. In most places of worship tune-books are used and harmonies are sung. It is common now for the number of the tune to be announced with the number of the hymn. Everyone feels that it is better that the choir should sing in harmony than in unison, and that, so far as correct part-singing obtains in the psalmody, the more delightful is the effect. In not a few churches, however, the name or number of the tune is never announced ; and while the choir are singing from notes, the people are entirely unsupplied with tune-books, and the rendering of harmony is therefore simply impossible to them. But in churches where it is customary to announce the tune as well as the hymn that is to be sung, how comes it to pass that very frequently scarcely a tune-book is to be seen in the people’s hands? Is it that few besides the choir understand the use of notes? Is it that tune-books are so costly as to be beyond the people’s means? Is it that the worshippers are insensible to the charms of harmony? No. There will often be found in a congregation those who spend money freely on musical instruments and music-books for private and family use ; persons of good education, who can play and sing with accuracy and ease ; who can take their parts in the social circle where music is cultivated and enjoyed ; but who never open a tune-book in public worship or make an effort to add to the efficiency of the songs of the sanctuary ; and in many cases this indifference is no more due to undevoutness of mind than it is to inability to sing well. If it were understood by a congregation that harmony-singing was

desired from the people as well as from the choir ; if their minds were directed to the importance of this part of public worship ; and if a general impression prevailed among them that it was right and important that all should do their best in the psalmody, such a common understanding would of itself work wonders in many a congregation. In numerous churches there may be found no inconsiderable number fully as competent as the members of the choir to sing in harmony and with good taste, who make no attempt whatever to sing their proper parts, and whose voices seldom rise above a musical whisper. There seems to be an impression in many congregations that while hearty, vigorous, harmonious singing is of course proper in the choir, it would be out of place on the part of the people. A sermon from the minister on the subject of public praise, exhorting all who had tune-books to bring them to the church, and advising those who had none and who could read music to procure copies and use them in worship, would of itself produce a surprising change in the psalmody of many a congregation. Many who delight in singing, and in good singing, would gladly help to produce it, if they felt that it was desired, that others around them were doing the same thing, and that there was no fear of their being stared at from neighbouring pews for their singularity. Let the importance of cultivating sacred song be urged upon the people ; let a public feeling in favour of good congregational singing be created ; and an amount of latent musical ability will be evoked in many a congregation, of the existence of which no previous conception had been formed.

But while many congregations contain large numbers who are familiar with the use of notes, and whose knowledge and ability might at once be turned to good account, we must expect to find in every assembly those who cannot read music, who nevertheless like to sing, and who would be willing to take pains to learn to sing properly, if the means of doing so were placed within their reach. If suitable measures be adopted for this purpose, the happiest and best results may be expected to follow. Let the low-voiced men in an assembly be able to sing the same bass part, with the confidence and enjoyment that will arise from the knowledge that they are singing right, and their voices will be heard with a power and fulness that will add to the psalmody a massiveness and grandeur unknown before. Let the low-voiced women and youths in a congregation have the pleasure of singing the part suited to the compass of their voices, and feel that they are singing the right notes, and that, without fear of creating discord, they may sing as loud as their hearts desire ; and they will ring out an alto melody that will add richness and sweetness to the general effect ; instead of straining painfully to sing a treble part beyond their compass, or singing some

extemporaneous second which they are afraid to sing boldly because they do not know that it is right, or else ceasing to sing at all.

In the majority of churches all painstaking and preparation for the psalmody are confined to the choir. If unison-singing were the custom of a congregation, this would be more excusable on account of the comparative easiness of this method; though even a unison-singing assembly would sing much more effectively if they had that common understanding with respect to time and expression which united practice would afford. But where harmony and not unison is professedly the rule of the psalmody, the absence of all meetings for instruction and practice cannot fail to produce serious loss and injury. The pitch of the tunes in present use is, as we have seen, so high that unison-singing by the whole congregation is impossible. Harmony-singing is universally assumed to be the rule of our psalmody; and this means that in a congregation destitute of tune-books, or unable to use them, about half the people are doomed to sing uncertainly, feebly, discordantly, uncomfortably to themselves and others, or else be silent. Can this be right? If tunes are sung at such a pitch in public worship that the low-voiced people present cannot sing the air, should not provision be made for their being enabled to sing the parts suited to the compass of their voices? Surprise and regret are often expressed that so many men and youths in our churches keep their mouths shut during the singing. But this is the natural result of the present state of things. They cannot sing in unison; the pitch is too high. They cannot sing in harmony; they do not know how. No wonder, then, that they do not sing at all. In week-evening and other services, where an instrument is not used, tunes are often pitched sufficiently low for all the people to sing the air, which, musically meagre though it be, is better than distressing or silencing a large proportion of the worshippers; but on Sundays, and where an instrument is used, the pitch is not thus lowered, and the ill results follow which we have pointed out.

Happily the difficulties in the way of teaching the people to sing by note are now greatly diminished, and are lessening every day. The tune-books in general use are printed in the tonic sol-fa as well as the established notation, and at low prices. Congregations accustomed to sing in harmony will generally be found to have meetings for instruction in the art of singing at sight, with a special view to the improvement of the psalmody of the church; and the holding of such meetings for instruction and practice will be found of great and essential service. For love or money someone may be engaged as conductor, who is acquainted with the tonic sol-fa system, since teachers of this method are now to be found in most towns of any size. If no such teacher can be got, let someone interested in the improvement of the psalmody set himself to

study the system, which is so simple as to be easily understood, and he will soon find himself able to teach others. It would be well if those who understand music already would attend these meetings, and render them the assistance and encouragement which their presence and their aid in singing would afford. Great, too, would be the gain if the minister were to attend and assist, and, if he be unacquainted with the system, try to master it, that he may set the example of part-singing and the use of notes.

Nothing can be more unfounded than the idea that the power of singing at sight is a very difficult one to acquire. Any promiscuous assembly of persons unacquainted with the tonic sol-fa system may be taught to sing, from the notes and in four-part harmony, some simple tune or chant which they have never heard before, on the first evening of their meeting, and that to their unbounded delight and astonishment. Whether the tonic sol-fa system be used, or the figure system, which some employ, or any other which may be preferred, the object aimed at should be to enable the people to use notes and to sing their own proper parts in correct time and tune, and to do this with facility and pleasure.

A most fruitful and easily-worked field of labour will be found among the youth of a congregation. Children delight in singing, and there will be no difficulty in getting together any number of them to learn to sing by note and in parts. Perhaps the chief difficulty may be the expense of getting all the children of a congregation furnished with tune-books. All whose parents can afford it will soon be supplied with copies, if a real and hearty desire for good congregational singing exist among the people. A little money would be well laid out in cheapening music-books for the poorer children, or they might pay for them by instalments. A congregation that can spend hundreds of pounds on an instrument will not grudge a few pounds for the cultivation of good singing by the people, if it be in earnest in desiring it. If the music book used in the church be found in the houses of the people, if the harmonies of the tunes be sung and played in the social circle, be practised and enjoyed at home, what a transforming influence on public worship would this exert!

That any considerable proportion of the members of a congregation would be willing to meet together weekly for a few months for the purpose of learning to read music and sing in parts may be regarded by many as most unlikely; and such incredulity will help to show to what a low estate psalmody has fallen in general estimation. No sense of responsibility in regard to it commonly rests upon the minds of the worshippers. That the choir should meet for practice and take pains to sing well is admitted to be right and important; that the people

should do anything of the sort will be a new and strange idea to many minds. In fact, good congregational singing, as we have defined it, is seldom aimed at, or conceived to be possible. When people speak of their having good singing in a church, they frequently mean that they have a good and well-played instrument and an efficient choir. It is a grievous error thus to mistake the means for the end. These things may be, and often are, where there is no good congregational singing; and good congregational singing may be found where these are not.

But though it be true that to talk to many a congregation about meeting for psalmody instruction and practice would be to bring strange things to their ears, we are persuaded that there is enough to be said in favour of such meetings to carry conviction to the minds of the people, and in very many cases to secure their concurrence. Why should it be assumed that the members of the choir are the only persons in the congregation that are willing to meet for this purpose? In numerous churches there are already many who would be found willing to attend the psalmody meetings if their presence were sincerely desired and earnestly invited; and multitudes who are now indifferent might be made interested and enthusiastic if fitting methods of procedure were adopted. One point of importance, which is not unfrequently overlooked, and disregard to which will be found fatal to success, is this—that the people shall feel that these meetings really enable them to make valuable attainments; that they are learning that which repays them for the time and trouble of attending. Merely singing a few tunes by ear will never accomplish this. Learning to sing at sight, to sing in harmony, to sing with expression, and to keep perfect time, will be felt to be worth the effort of attending. There is enough of conscientiousness, and zeal, and delight in divine service, and enjoyment of good singing, to secure the attendance of a sufficient number of persons at such meetings to produce a revolution in the psalmody of multitudes of churches if sincere and earnest efforts in this direction were made. But, as our readers know full well, such efforts are seldom put forth. It is accepted as a matter of course that the singing of the choir and the singing of the people shall be of different kinds. The singing of the choir is the result of practice and preparation; the singing of the people is left to the chapter of accidents.

And yet the people can meet together for objects in which they are interested; and if they were really interested in the psalmody, they would be willing to meet together for its improvement. We could point to a congregation of very poor people in the metropolis who have good congregational singing, far better than that of many a wealthy and cultured assembly around them, and who have attained this proficiency by persevering effort. They have tonic sol-fa classes for persons of different

degrees of musical attainment. They know by experience what a mighty power for good, congregational singing of the right sort is ; and they have given themselves with heart and soul to its cultivation, and are enjoying abundant recompense for their labours.

In all bodies of singers, whether church choirs or others, those who sing the same part are placed together. Union is strength. To a certain and sufficient extent, this principle may be easily adopted in a congregation. Two or three or half-a-dozen persons who sing the same part, will find that by being together, the ease and accuracy of their singing will be materially increased. Every congregation contains a number of persons with no particular family ties, who would as willingly sit in one part of the church as another, and who, if they are interested in psalmody, would readily sit where they could get and give the greatest help. Groups of treble and contralto voices might be obtained from the Sunday-school. Numbers of young men and others might be formed into tenor and bass groups, which might be placed where they would do the greatest amount of good. In appointing the sittings of new comers in a church, some regard might be had to the parts they would sing, and they might be placed near some who sang the same part as themselves. If the four parts of the harmony are distinctly sung in a church, those persons who are not sitting in or near a group will yet be sensibly helped by the clear rendering of their several parts by others. As in many churches large choirs are formed of those who are interested in the singing, so there may always be found some in a congregation who would be willing to sit where they could be most useful, and only those who are desirous of doing so need be asked. "Work with the willing," is a useful maxim. As the sweetness and power of correct, harmonious, and expressive singing are felt in a congregation, so will the readiness of the people to maintain it be increased.

For those who wish to employ the tonic sol-fa system for psalmody purposes, two pamphlets, entitled "The Short Course," and "The Sunday-school Singer," contain all the instructions and directions that will be found necessary ; and we may observe, that so far from there being any incompatibility between the use of this system and singing from the staff notation, it is commonly found that in what is called the intermediate examination, for those who are able to sing an ordinary psalm tune at first sight (in which it is optional with the student to sing from the established notation or the tonic sol-fa), about three-fourths prefer to sing from the ordinary notation as well as from the tonic sol-fa.

If good congregational singing is to be got, care must be taken to adapt the tunes to the hymns, and the people should not be wearied by

the too frequent repetition of the same hymn, chosen over and over again in a hurry by the minister. We venture to suggest, on the other hand, that the practice of some ministers of making not only the hymn after the sermon bear upon the topic of discourse (the propriety of which no one can question), but also all the hymns that precede the sermon, is a metaphysical as well as a musical mistake. In selecting hymns for a service, heed should be given to the tunes as well as to the words; and there should be a good understanding between him who selects the hymns and him who appoints the tunes. If psalms and hymns of praise, adoration, thanksgiving, and joy are most frequent in the services, the brightness and fulness of the peoples' song will be found to be promoted thereby.

In the meetings for psalmody instruction the easiest tunes should be taught first; and those tunes should always be preferred the several parts of which are easy and flowing, each part forming a pleasant melody by itself, rather than those tunes the parts of which are hard to sing, though they may contain what organists would call "fine" chords, easy for them to play, but difficult and perhaps impossible for the people to sing.

Every child that can read should have a copy of the hymn-book used in the services; and it would be well if the hymns were explained to the children, and they were encouraged to commit them to memory. Tunes should be learned by means of the sol-fa syllables, and never by the use of sacred words; and the minister should endeavour, by every means in his power, to make the psalmody a devotional and intelligent engagement—heartfelt, spiritual worship.

The adoption of such measures as we have suggested will be found to promote moral as well as musical harmony among a people: the preacher will be inspired by the holy excitement which such congregational singing will enkindle; and the services as a whole will be lifted to a higher plane; the young will be interested, and all the people will feel that they have their part, and an important and a joyous one, in the worship; a legitimate attractiveness will be added to the engagements of God's house, and the psalmody will become more than ever a real and precious means of grace.

Guiläford.

J. T. FEASTON.



NOTES ON RURAL NONCONFORMITY.

BY AN ESSEX VILLAGE PASTOR.

THE small Church in this place was first formed by a few persons who were dismissed from a Church in Cambridgeshire, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Francis Holcroft. After that pious and devoted man was released from Cambridge gaol, under the indulgence of 1671, he resumed his labours with such zeal that Palmer says, "there is scarcely a village in Cambridgeshire but some old person can show you the barn where Holcroft preached." His labours also extended over the county borders into portions of Essex, and in the year 1685 this Church was founded, which has existed with varying fortunes until the present time. It has never been either very strong or very numerous, but has, nevertheless, become the "mother church" to several others in the neighbourhood which have exceeded it in numerical strength; and it has been able calmly and usefully to hold on its way through successive generations, so as forcibly to illustrate what I once heard the late revered Dr. Vaughan say, that "if you want to see the strength of Nonconformity, you must go into the villages."

The parish in which our chapel is situated is a poor straggling place, having a population of rather more than a thousand souls, scattered over the large area of 3,800 acres. The population is entirely agricultural. There is no manufacture of any kind; not even a brick is made in the village. As is the case in many rural districts, the number of the inhabitants is gradually declining, having decreased to the extent of two hundred during the last twenty years. This gradual falling off in the population, together with the change in the state of things in many of the Established Churches since the time when most of the farmers in the county were Dissenters, is an increasing source of weakness to Nonconformity in the rural districts. Many of our village Churches are only existing by dint of constant struggle, and it certainly looks as though harder times were yet in store for them. The Church to which I have the honour and joy to minister in the Gospel has constantly to contend against these difficulties and hindrances; yet I trust that it is doing its work for Christ as earnestly as at any former period of its history.

Our congregation comes from five parishes, beside the one in which the chapel is placed. These outside villages are distant from two to five miles from the central place of religious assembly. This involves a good deal of travelling on Sundays for some of our friends, and also makes it difficult to get the congregation together when the weather is very unfavourable. It is gratifying, however, to see many of the hearers coming to worship regularly, even when the storms of winter beat fiercely

upon them. Some of my friends never allow the weather to prevent them from filling their places either in the sanctuary or the Sunday-school. Such reliable ones are the pastor's true helpers. I am sorry to say, nevertheless, that I can perceive an increasing indisposition on the part of the villagers to travel long distances to attend Divine worship on Sabbath days. The attendance from the outside villages declines, rather than increases. On this score I have some fear for the future of this as well as other rural Churches.

We have had three successive chapels on the same site since the Church first had a home in the parish. What the first place of worship was as to outward appearance or internal convenience, I cannot say; but the second one was an unsightly, square lath-and-plaster building, with high-backed seats, little or no ventilation, and altogether without accommodation for the Sabbath-school. Notwithstanding the scrupulous care with which it was always repaired and painted, its infirmities became so serious, that in 1872 we were compelled to remove it entirely, and erect the present substantial Gothic chapel, with school-room and vestries, which together form one of the prettiest and most comfortable chapel properties possessed by any small village church in the kingdom. This building, we trust, will last longer than both the preceding ones together.

Our Sunday services are held morning and afternoon, the latter service being most numerously attended. It is not to be wondered at that some of the hearers do really go to sleep during afternoon sermon. They are chiefly out of doors in the open air all the week; many of them are thoroughly tired with the week's toils, and coming to church for the second time so shortly after dinner as two o'clock, not to feel drowsy is almost impossible with some people. How to keep them awake is a problem I have long been trying to solve; but, alas! I have not succeeded yet. I fear this drowsiness is infectious. If dull preaching makes sleepy hearers, I can also testify that sleepy hearers sometimes cause drowsy preaching. Afternoon services are generally considered objectionable both by preachers and hearers, and even in some of the villages there is an outcry rising up against them; but in the winter-time, with our dark nights and dirty lanes, an evening service is impracticable to many who reside at a distance from their usual place of worship.

My own Sunday evenings are spent in one or other of our outside villages, in several of which we have small chapels, and to which I generally proceed with some friend returning thither after afternoon worship. After the third service is ended I have a walk home of from two to four miles. As my practice is to conduct the opening exercises of the Sunday-school every Sabbath morning, it will be seen that I myself get a long day's work, which often tires me completely out; but it

is difficult to see how some of the smaller villages can be served with Gospel teaching, unless we do all in our power to preach Christ in these out-of-the-way corners of our land.

When I came here nearly seven years ago, a neighbouring pastor, by way of encouragement, told me that if I would visit the people during the week, I might "whistle to them on Sunday." I also remember once hearing an influential deacon in a large Midland town say that the sermons required by our little congregations could be so easily and quickly prepared, as to leave a considerable portion of our time for other occupations. I venture to think that the minister and deacon were both wrong. It will most likely be as great a labour for a village pastor to prepare for his limited village congregation, as for a town minister to prepare for his larger audience. The difference is that the latter will have a large number of intelligent and cultivated persons in the pews before him, while the village pastor has only a few such individuals; but these few—though they be only "two or three"—want intelligent and thoughtful and well-prepared preaching in their village pulpit. In most of our rural Churches we have a small number of hearers who know what good preaching really is. They read the *Christian World Pulpit*, *Christian Age*, Mr. Spurgeon's, and other sermons, and so are brought to require a higher standard of pulpit work than some friends at a distance suppose. The village pastors like their flocks all the better on this account; but those who advocate a country pastor's having five or six day's secular work, and expect him to preach three times every Sunday, administer sacraments, look after the Sabbath-school, hold week night and cottage services, deliver lectures occasionally, visit the sick, and perform pastoral duty in five or six different villages, cannot surely be those who desire to see the pulpits of our village Nonconformist sanctuaries filled with a better-trained and more influential ministry.

Much has been said and written about *Church finance*. In this matter the great thing is to have a good leader, one who is generous, and ready to show the people what they ought to do in the way of giving, and one who at the same time is business-like, and able to manage the monetary matters with method, tact, and punctuality. Some deacons are men of business, but not liberal enough to lead a congregation to do their best; while others who are generous, are not business-like, and so do not secure the entire confidence of the subscribers. The "right man in the right place" is a man of business, method, and promptness, who will never ask the people to do what he is not ready to do himself, and who by inspiring confidence will stimulate the congregation to do all that lies in their power towards the support of the Gospel in their midst. Such a man this village Church has been blest with for years. Our treasurer is "a simple frank man, without any high pretensions to an oppressive

greatness ;" but by the way in which he has managed our finances has been an untold benefit to this little country cause, and will, I doubt not, leave a good influence long to survive him. We are only a "feeble folk," yet by wise management we have raised large sums of money for carrying on the Lord's work. In 1862, nearly £200 was spent upon the old chapel in connection with the great centenary movement of that year, all of which the people contributed themselves. In 1872 we built the new chapel, which cost £1,300, more than three-fourths of which was raised among ourselves, the place being opened free of debt. Two years later the chapel-house had to be renovated, at a cost of more than £100, all cheerfully given by a people who have not a rich man among them. Now we have to ask the friends to put their hands into their pockets again, as our trust-deed must be renewed, the burying-ground enlarged, and certain repairs attended to. The best of all too is, that during the giving required to meet these special and heavy expenses, the minister's stipend has been increased to one-half more than it stood at eight years ago, and has always been paid with unfailing punctuality on the very day that it has become due. This improvement is largely owing to our having so zealous and practical a financial leader at the head of affairs. Yet this useful and worthy deacon, now nearing his "fourscore years," is the most modest and retiring of men ; and knowing how regularly and with what lively interest he reads the *CONGREGATIONALIST*, I fear that when his eye meets this page, I shall incur his displeasure for the first time during many years of most harmonious and happy intercourse.

We have one institution here which I should like to see in connection with every village Church. Our "Reading Society" has been in existence for the greater part of a century. By yielding to the spirit of the age at all times, this little society has been an immense boon to this small sequestered congregation, and never was more thriving or useful than it is at present. By its agency the best monthly publications are regularly read, and a constant supply of the newest books is kept up. The society holds bi-monthly meetings at the homes of its members, for payment of subscriptions, ordering new books, Christian intercourse, and worship ; and also an annual meeting for balancing the years' accounts, and disposing of the old books and periodicals to those members who are willing to pay the most for them. The prosperity of this society is in a large measure also due to our having "the right man in the right place." The honorary secretary is a young farmer who is just suited for the post, and who acts as our "officer of literature"—if a small village congregation may be allowed to have an official with such a high-sounding title—and supplies a large number of magazines to the congregation and Sunday-school, month by month.

A village pastorate has nevertheless its drawbacks and discouragements. I am very isolated. The railway is more than four miles away; the nearest town is seven miles off. I can but very rarely see my ministerial brethren. Many of my congregation live so far away that I can call upon them but seldom. My family sometimes complain that they are shut out from the world. The young people, for the most part, leave us early to fight the battle of life in larger places, where their labour will be better remunerated. When deaths, removals, or other circumstances take old friends and families away, we have to wait years before their places are again filled up. Few, unacquainted with us, would believe the extent to which my congregation has suffered from these causes during the last five years. Our comfort and hope, however, is in the fact that the Divine Master and Lord ever remains. He has said, "Lo! I am with you alway;" and we know that He can find instruments for carrying on His work in the Church and the world when we shall all of us be gone.

We sometimes feel in our village work that the town Churches do not show that practical sympathy with us which they might. They do not always have an adequate idea of the difficulties under which our work has oftentimes to be done. Might they not do something more than just make collections for county associations, or sending a few friends to an anniversary service, if the day happens to be fine enough for a country trip? Might they not let their pastors come and spend an occasional Sabbath amongst our people, and be satisfied themselves to "sit at the feet" of a village minister for once? Although I am not in the least ambitious to get into the pulpits whose thresholds are so rarely crossed by a brother from the country, I cannot but think that such an exchange might be beneficial to all parties, and it would help to moderate that sense of isolation which often comes upon us in connection with our Master's work, in these sparsely populated and out-of-the-way rural districts.

One of our greatest dangers is *stagnation*. The dulness and monotonousness of our village life has its influence upon our spiritual life and work to a greater extent than some of those would think who are called to serve Christ amidst the stimulants and excitements, the "sweetness and light," of more populous places. We are prone to grow languid in our too quiet atmosphere, and thus to come short in that lively, earnest, and hearty devotedness, without which Churches do not prosper much in these stirring times. We want to be doing our Christian work more nobly and thoroughly, and yet on account of our very position we lack at least some of the lesser incentives to the highest kind of spiritual service. Large congregations, numbers of willing workers, special services, increasing opportunities, and ever widening circles of influence,

do tell upon human nature, especially when sanctified by Divine grace for sublime and noble work ; they help, in some measure, to quicken the steps and warm the hearts of the Lord's people in His blessed service. Some of these outward auxiliary forces we have to do without in the rural districts, and so we are made to feel all the more how much we need the presence and power of the Holy Ghost. "Awake, O north wind ; and come thou south ; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."

A LAY SERMON ON PREACHING.*

BY A COUNTRY DOCTOR.

THE relations of the Pew and the Pulpit are demanding everywhere much attention in this country. Putting aside, however, the more general question, let us consider the special features of the relationship as it exists between the preacher and his hearers amongst modern Independents. We have inherited a tradition by which we regard the sermon as by no means an unimportant portion of our religious worship, and we have been wont to boast of the greater excellence of our preachers as compared with those of other religious bodies. We are ready enough to acknowledge the genius of a Maurice, a Robertson, or a Stanley, but we hold, nevertheless, that the rank and file of our own ministers surpass in preaching power an equal number, chosen at random, from all, or any, of the other Christian denominations in England ; and we regard ourselves, I believe, as occupying in this respect an intermediate position, a sort of happy, golden mean, between the cultured indifferentism of the Church clergyman and the often uncultured enthusiasm of the Methodist preacher. I do not say we do right to view the matter in this way, but I believe I am merely giving utterance to an unspoken undercurrent of Congregationalist opinion when I so express myself. I confess personally to as much unwillingness to see the one extreme as the other become the rule in our Churches ; but, on the other hand,

* Dr. Cameron's paper deserves the consideration both of preachers and hearers, though there are some points which admit, I think, of an effective reply. The late M. de Felice, one of the most distinguished French preachers of his time, once asked me how often I preached. "Three times a week." "Oh," he replied, "that is impossible" (*c'est impossible*). I answered that the arrangements of our Churches required two sermons on the Sunday, and, at least, an informal address during the week. "But," he answered, "you should preach a sermon not oftener than once in two months." "And what am I to do at the other services?" "Why, give *une petite meditation*," by which he meant very much the same thing as we mean by an address at the Lord's Supper, or at a Wednesday evening service. I might have answered in his own words, "C'est impossible."—ED.

I fear we are more likely to fall, between the two stools, on to a hard floor of dull and uniform, shall I say, excellence.

To the majority of hearers in one of our average congregations a very carefully-prepared and scholarly discourse would, I am afraid, be indeed "a weariness of the flesh;" but, on the other hand, at any rate to an influential minority, an earnest but inconsecutive oration would probably fail of its due effect, especially if the preacher's eloquence outran his obedience to the laws of grammar. There can be little doubt, I think, that, as hearers, we are, on the one hand, too cold and unsympathetic, and, on the other, too indolent to follow and look for thoughts which do not obtrude themselves upon our attention. We are, it seems to me, often either too critical or too indifferent. And these two extremes are not unfrequently found in one and the same Church. No doubt in large towns particular ministers will attract to their chapels principally those who appreciate the particular kind of religious pabulum they can supply, but as long as God distributes different degrees of intellectual activity to members of the same family, as long as it shall still remain true of our wealthier congregations that the poor we have always with us, so long will there be different degrees of culture and varying amounts of the capability of reflection amongst the members of one and the same congregational community. We need not hope for uniformity in this matter: variety is one of the first laws of God's universe.

The immense advances made of late in scientific knowledge have been mainly due to a more careful and reverent study of nature herself, and if we are to continuously improve as the race grows every day older, we must not fail to examine from time to time the natural phenomena amidst which we have to do our work. We must not allow our clear-sightedness to be obscured by ancient traditions, nor let our reverence for what has been interfere with our recognition of what now is. The influence for good of a Church will depend very much on the adaptability of its machinery to the requirements of the age, and we shall greatly err if we too persistently push what, after all, are not the essentials of our Congregationalism, and while rendering tithes of mint and anise and cummin, neglect the weightier matters of the law.

Let us grant, then, that the sermon, if not the one essential of our service, is yet a matter of no small importance in our worship, and let us next inquire in what particulars amongst us at the present day it is found wanting, and what are the reasons in Nature's economy of this inadequacy if any such exist. I have tried to point out that our danger to some extent lies in mediocrity. Two classes of hearers have to be suited, and to avoid offending either the preacher is apt to steer clear of excellence of any kind. But though the state of the pew thus conduces, in part at any rate, to the monotonous equality of the discourse,

a much stronger reason, as it seems to me, will be found in the unnatural conditions imposed upon the preacher himself. If a sermon is to be edifying it surely should be the result of much patient, careful, and prayerful study on the part of the minister; and how, I ask, is it possible for a man of less than giant mould to carefully, patiently, and prayerfully elaborate in this way not less than three discourses in the week, a work so many of our pastors are actually expected to accomplish. But even supposing that, after a time, the minister, finding no one comes to hear it, begins to give up writing a special week-night lecture, and restricts the actual labour of composition to preparing two sermons, each lasting say half-an-hour, for the Lord's-day, how, I ask, is it possible for him to go on thus spinning out his brains week after week, month after month, year after year, say for twenty years, without either going mad or writing twaddle? Fortunately for the men themselves the latter is the more usual alternative. If we thus persist in overtaxing the brain power of our pastors, is it not our own fault if they in turn diet us on the weakest of water-gruel? If a sermon is to be worth listening to, it must be the result, not merely of the immediately previous study of the subject preached about, but of the matured and careful consideration of months and even years. But when is our pastor to find leisure for this careful consideration, this maturing of his opinion and his thoughts, if he is to be constantly haunted by the feeling that two sermons, perfect and entire and wanting nothing, must be ready for next Sunday? I say he cannot do it. The machine cannot stand the strain; it will break down or produce inferior work.

I do not think we sufficiently realise this fact. Someone perhaps says, "Oh, I never find any difficulty when I speak in public; I need no preparation, my ideas flow easily enough." Granted that they do, the question remains, what are they worth, and what do the hearers think of them? Supposing that, for the sake of argument, we take for granted that your ideas, which flow so easily without preparation, are of any value at all, how long would they continue thus to flow if you had to give utterance to them twice a week regularly to the same audience? What length of time would it be before your hearers knew exactly what you were going to say next as well, if not better, than you did yourself? No; there are few propositions more self-evident than that a sermon, to be worth listening to, must have been well worked at. True it is that some of the best sermons ever delivered have had no immediate preparation; but in this case the whole previous life of the preacher had contributed to their production. Such sermons were doubtless the result of Divine inspiration, but they were the result of an inspiration working by and through the materials previously accumulated in the preacher's brain. Such cases are rare, they occur to the best men but

occasionally, and are themselves the strongest proof I can offer of what I said—that a sermon ought to be the result, not merely of immediately previous study, but of the matured thoughts and opinions of a thoughtful and religious mind. Such inspirations, I repeat, are rare; they are not to be commanded at the rate of two per week.

But someone will reply, "That is all our minister has to do." Is it indeed? Think one moment. Two sermons a week carefully to read for and prepare—but have they not to be delivered? Who that has addressed a large audience does not know the excitement and subsequent exhaustion that attend upon public speaking? But not merely has your pastor to read you two essays in a voice sufficiently loud to let you hear every word he says, he must also deliver his opinions in a manner likely to arrest your attention and keep you from listless apathy, if not from sleep. The effect of his discourse will depend quite as much upon his delivery as upon its composition. Do you doubt the exertion? Go and feel the preacher's pulse as he descends the pulpit stairs, you will find it beats one-half, if not twice, as rapidly as in his ordinary state.

But the sermon is not all the service, as amongst us it is usual for the minister to give out the hymns, read the lessons, and extemporise three or four prayers, and this he does twice on the Sunday and once during the week. Here then physically, and putting aside the preparation of his sermons altogether, is at least a day and a half's hard work every week. Do you doubt the hardness of the work? Go and see your minister on Monday morning, say on the day after the first Sunday of the month, look at his tongue, examine his pulse, find out how he feels, and what he is fit for, and then cease for ever to indulge in that phantom of a lively imagination that preaching twice is not hard work. But is this all? Are none of his flock sick? Does he make no pastoral visits? Has he no meetings for inquirers? Has he no baptisms, no marriages, no funerals? And then, besides all this, he is a man esteemed in your town and is called upon to speak at Bible Society, Liberationist, Missionary, and a hundred other meetings. A man he is with a clear head, a gift of language and a warm heart, and you like to hear of his appearing on the platform to speak for the true and the right, to denounce oppression and plead for the oppressed. But all this means work, hard, brain-taxing work; and yet you wonder he cannot have two new sermons ready for your fastidious palate every Sunday. But you perhaps again object that public men, statesmen, members of Parliament manage to put vigour and earnestness into their speeches, and that some of them are constantly speaking. But, I ask, how many great debates take place in a single session of Parliament? Certainly

not two every week; and for the rest most Parliamentary speaking is mere talk.

Poe says great poems, such as the "Paradise Lost," consist of short poems strung together by verses with no poetry in them whatever. Such is very much the case with our great debaters: they make occasional great speeches, and fill up the gaps with Parliamentary small talk. And if we expect our ministers to preach us two new sermons every week, we must in the very nature of things make up our minds to get occasionally a discourse worth listening to, but to hear, the remainder of the time, the veriest small talk. I say in the nature of things we must make up our minds to this, but we need do so only if we expect a certain given amount of sermon matter at certain regular intervals of time.

But is there any real necessity for this periodical infliction of pulpit small talk? Do we really need two sermons a week, good, bad, or indifferent, as the case may be? Imagine one of the old Hebrew prophets pumping out a prophecy at stated intervals, whether the divine afflatus was upon him or not. The thing is absurd, though to my mind it is scarcely less so to expect a modern preacher to produce two sermons every Sunday which shall bear appropriately the label of a certain tea—"always good alike." Not that it is impossible to get this uniformity of flavour; it may be had, but the result is apt to be a paraphrase upon the motto, and "always good alike" to bear equally the interpretation "always alike weak."

Here then, it appears to me, is our mistake as Congregationalists. We have reached a stage in which we can no longer tolerate mediocrity, and yet we refuse to take the only rational way to get out of the difficulty by ceasing to demand that which nature herself denies. Our preachers are no worse than their predecessors, it is we who are more critical and less tolerant. But let us at least be reasonable, and if we demand better food let us grant the necessary time for its preparation. Having pointed out the mistake that I think we are committing, I may be allowed to indicate in what direction I should be inclined to look for a remedy.

First, then, I think we should do very well with much fewer sermons. Surely the principal part of our higher spiritual life should not consist in listening to religious lectures. One-third of an ordinary service amongst us, and sometimes more than a third, consists of an address in which the minister tortures an unfortunate passage of Scripture, twists it and turns it and otherwise maltreats it, and deduces lessons from it which, though they may be true enough in themselves, are nevertheless sadly out of place where they are introduced. There is no reason, that I can see, why a minister should not preach upon any

of the burning questions of the day, but I cannot see the necessity of his tacking on his discourse to a passage having nothing to do with modern politics. It would be more honest to do without a text, than make believe to expound Scripture when really the sermon is not about the text at all.

On the other hand, why should we not have genuine expositions of Scripture, not of single passages bereft of their context, but of whole chapters in their natural relationship? Surely it is an important function of the pastor to guide his flock to the green pastures of holy writ: to show us how to read aright, to explain difficulties, and to teach us to think of what the words before us really mean. Yet how seldom is this done. How few ministers have the courage to announce that they have no sermon, but, asking us to open our Bibles, proceed to explain verse by verse, as they read, the glorious truths contained in the sacred page. Would it be, indeed, too often thus to study God's word together once in the week? I trow not. And yet ask any minister with a good library whether it would not be much easier for him thus to give a running commentary on a chapter once on Sunday, than to prepare a second sermon. The very variety of the exercise would itself afford relief from mental strain, a relief not only to the pastor but to the congregation. In this way book after book of the Bible could be carefully read, and he will be rash who says that the words of the sacred writers thus carefully studied will be less wholesome food than the elaborate deductions of the minister himself.

Again, not only would fewer sermons be a relief to both teacher and hearer, but our ministers might exchange pulpits more frequently with much advantage both to themselves and us. In most of our larger towns there are two or three congregational churches. Why should not their several pastors mutually arrange so that, say the minister of this place preaches to his own flock one Sunday in every three or four in the morning, and expounds the Scripture every evening. Or, if thought better, let the sermon be in the evening, the exposition in the morning. In this way the pastor would, as a teacher, keep his hold upon his own people, guiding their reading and interpretation of Scripture, while they would at the same time have the opportunity of profiting by other ways of presenting familiar truths as his ministerial brethren supplied his place frequently for one part of the day.

Amongst the Wesleyan Methodists a plan of this kind obtains. A group of smaller churches is associated with one of the larger Churches as a circuit, and to each circuit a certain number of ministers is told off, according to its size. These ministers, in rotation, supply the pulpit of the central church, and, the other Sundays, are engaged in preaching to the surrounding and smaller congregations. In this way the central

pulpit is always filled by one of the stated ministers who supply the smaller churches from time to time, the gaps being filled up by lay aid.

I should not, of course, dream of suggesting the adoption of such a complex and mechanical mechanism as that of our Wesleyan friends. It suits them admirably, but would be utterly at variance with the spirit and genius of Independency. There is no reason, however, why we should not borrow an idea from our co-religionists, and adapt it to our more elastic and less artificial Congregationalism. I need not anticipate all the objections that are certain to be alleged against any such departure from accustomed usages. Although politically we are Liberals, there is a strong Conservative element in the Independent body. I shall be told that the congregation would grumble if exposition of Scripture were substituted for the sermon. I answer, try them. Some will no doubt grumble if any change is made, but at present they have a right to grumble at the average sermon. I think there would be less rather than more grumbling, if the change were made, as there certainly would be less cause. I repeat, try them. It is the only way to be sure.

Again, I fancy I hear a minister say that he does not think his congregation could bear to listen to Mr. So-and-so, his brother minister. Does Mr. So-and-so not preach the Gospel? Oh, he replies, it is not that, but he has an awkward habit in the pulpit. My dear sir, have you no awkward habit in the pulpit which your own hearers have grown accustomed to, and will they not soon learn to tolerate Mr. So-and-so? Again, I repeat, try them. It is the only way to be sure.

Here, then, I leave the matter, urging, as a student of nature, that our present system fails because it controverts her laws, and that the occasional exceptions, where men, as I have said of giant mould, succeed in preaching good sermons in spite of want of time and too great press of other work, no more disprove my case than the fact that certain men of strong physical constitution can, without apparent injury to their health, drink freely and excessively of the fire-waters whose abuse works such terrible havoc in our midst, proves that alcohol taken to excess does not exert a deleterious influence upon the system. We regard Congregationalism as the most elastic of Church organisations, but the vital principle of her existence is indeed dead within her if in obedience, either to the traditions of antiquity, or to modern conventionalism, our Church is unable to place herself in complete obedience to the laws of Nature and of God, and to stand forth in all the glorious liberty wherewith Christ has made her free.

Huddersfield.

J. SPOTTISWOODE CAMERON.

THE POET.

READ lightly o'er the poet's tomb,
And mourn with me the adverse fate
That held him back, with changeless doom,
From all he loved of fair and great.

Oh ! do not scorn his broken lyre,
Though Nature, at his hapless birth,
Gave him a soul of heavenly fire,
With the weak utterance of earth :

A lark, that could but feebly sing
His welcome to the morning sky :
An eagle, born with powerless wing,
That vainly strove to soar on high.

Though from his magic brush could flow
The lovely hues of summer flowers,
And with sweet accent, soft and low,
He sang amid the forest bowers,

He cared not in the common way
To sing, and paint, and humbly rhyme ;
He yearned to write some glorious lay
Of lofty thoughts, and deeds sublime ;

To be the wonder of his land,
The artist lord, the poet king ;
To paint some picture nobly grand ;
To chant the words that angels sing.

But when his youthful days were past,
He learnt this lesson, deeply true,—
God loves not more the ocean vast
Than the clear drop of morning dew.

Though still he sighed for words sublime,
Though still he yearned for grander lays,
He sweetly sang his simple rhyme,
In softest notes of love and praise.

And now amid the angel throng,
His lines with nobler cadence flow—
He sings at last the perfect song,
The music of his dreams below.

CONSTANCE C. W. NADEN.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

JULY 1.—“*He increased His people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies.*”—Psalm cv. 24.

THE children of Israel went down into Egypt numbering “seventy souls;” they left Egypt, according to Exodus xii. 37, numbering “600,000 on foot that were men,” and if we add to this number the women and children, there must have been more than two million who made the Exodus under Moses. A second account in the Book of Numbers (chap. i. 46), which states that at the numbering of the people at Sinai there were 603,550 males of twenty years old and upwards, substantially confirms this enormous increase. Now it is well known that this extraordinary multiplication of the original “seventy souls” during the stay of Israel in Egypt,—whether we reckon that stay at the longer period of 430 years, or, as seems most probable, only allow them 215 years for their residence there,—has long been one of the standing difficulties of the Old Testament history. It would hardly fall within either the purpose of these notes, or the necessarily brief space that can be allotted to them, to discuss the trustworthiness of the numbers, or the explanations which have been given to account for them: it is sufficient to say that they are accepted as correct, and defended, by Ewald himself, the greatest authority in the modern rationalistic school of criticism in Germany, and may therefore be taken as at any rate not so indefensible as objectors generally assume. It is worthy of notice also, that the history itself emphasises the multiplication of Israel in Egypt as an unusual and extraordinary fact, and provides for it a special cause, the peculiar promise made, not once, but over and over again, to Abraham, that God would “multiply his seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore” (Gen. xxii. 17); for it is a distinctive feature of the Divine reasonableness of the Bible history, that it never asks us to believe in a supernatural wonder, without at the same time justifying its appearance by an adequate cause.

The lesson, however, that we may learn from the text is independent

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition; these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

altogether of the results of modern criticism. Whatever deductions may be made from the numbers of the Book of Exodus by the most hostile critic, the fact still remains to be accounted for, that a small and obscure tribe not only rapidly multiplied into a great nation, but became one of the mightiest powers, if not the mightiest, in the education and development of the human race. A great German Emperor once asked his chaplain for a short proof of the inspiration of the Bible. "The Jews, your Majesty," was the chaplain's answer; and he was right. Not only is the continued existence of the Jewish people, dispersed throughout the world, in it, and yet in a sense not of it; "present in every country, and with a home in none, intermixed and yet separated," one of the standing miracles of history, and a fact to which there is no parallel in the history of the world; but the influence which Jewish thought, and especially Jewish religious thought, has had upon mankind is at this moment the chief factor in the moral life of the world. Nor is it the least remarkable peculiarity of the Jewish people, that their own religious leaders, their psalmists and prophets, have from the very first attributed all the wonderful growth and power of the nation, not to themselves, but to God. No other people, in the authoritative documents of its history, has ever so completely renounced all ordinary human explanations of its prosperity, as the Jews have done. From first to last they have given but one reason for the position they held in the world, that they had received a supernatural revelation from God, and had been chosen from all the nations to be His peculiar people. The inspiration of the greatest Psalms in the Jewish Psalter may be traced back to this conviction as its spring, and however the song may vary, it recurs again and again to this faith as its fundamental note.

We believe the Christian Church has now inherited both the glory and the responsibilities of the Jewish people, and if the whole of the past history of Israel was a type of the future history of the Church, the multiplication of the children of Israel, and their influence upon the world, are but a prophecy of the vaster triumphs of that Kingdom which is now set up, not in one nation alone, but in the whole earth.

And the true ground of our confidence in the ultimate spread of Christianity is simply this, that God is on its side and therefore it must finally overcome every foe to its progress. Truth will finally prevail, however long it may seem to be worsted in the struggle with unbelief, but it will prevail, not because truth by itself is stronger than error, but because behind all truth there is the arm of the Eternal God, from whom truth springs, pledged to win for it the victory. And when its last triumph has been won, and "all nations, and kindreds, and peoples,

and tongues," stand before the throne, the new song which they shall sing shall but take up and transfigure the ancient song of the Jewish Church, "He increased His people, and made them stronger than their enemies."

JULY 8.—"*By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.*"—Hebrews ii. 23.

The story of the boyhood of great men is always full of interest. Just as we delight to follow a great river, that bears on its bosom the wealth and commerce of a nation, up to its rise among the distant hills, and to think of what the little spring we see there bubbling from the ground will one day become, so we love to trace the first beginnings of any life that has been one of the master-lives in the history of the world. What a fascination, for example, still attaches to Stratford-on-Avon, where William Shakespeare was born. The house his parents lived in, the school to which he was sent, his boyish companions and games, the influences under which the lad grew up, never lose their charm for us. Something of the same kind of interest attaches to this "Golden Text" in the Hebrews, and to the history in Exodus, to which it adds, as we shall see, one most important fact. Moses, altogether apart from the Divine call and commission he received, was one of the very few who have been leaders of men whose greatness increases rather than diminishes as time passes by. He was a great general, a great statesman, and a great religious reformer in one, and it is not too much to say of him, that his single life altered the whole history of the world. It would be strange if the story of the birth and early years of such a life had no interest for us.

And what a touching and beautiful story it is! The little child is born, and his wonderful beauty at once impresses his parents with the conviction that a great future was before him. Every mother thinks her own child the most beautiful in the world, and in many instances it is a merciful kindness to the child it is so; but in the case of Moses there is no doubt his parents' pride was fully justified. The history in Exodus tells us he was a "goodly child," and Stephen, in his address before the Sanhedrin, adds to this, for he says he was "exceeding fair," or, as the words, literally translated, mean "fair to God," whilst Josephus, after his rhetorical manner, says, "As for his beauty, there was nobody so unpolite as, when they saw Moses, they were not greatly surprised at the beauty of his countenance; nay, it happened frequently, that those who met him as he was carried along the road, were obliged to turn again upon seeing the child, that they left what they were about and stood still a great while to look on him." Pharaoh's commandment to the

Egyptians had been relentless and rigid: "Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river," hoping thus to exterminate by gradually absorbing the hated Jewish race; but the parents of the little Moses "were not afraid of the commandment of the king," although disobedience meant peril of death to themselves. So they hide the child for three months, and when he "could no longer be hid," instead of casting him into the river, they cast him on it in an ark of bulrushes, that his mother's fingers had made for him. Miriam, Moses' sister, stands "afar off," to watch the fate of the tiny vessel with its precious freight.

It so happened, by one of those strange coincidences which the world calls "luck," but Heaven calls "our Father's care," that just at this moment Pharaoh's daughter was bathing in the river. She sees the little boat stranded among the bulrushes, and, with feminine curiosity, sends her maid at once to fetch it. When it is opened she discovers the babe lying there, who at once makes its best appeal to a woman's heart by crying as only a baby can cry. So the little one is taken home by the king's daughter as her own child, and when a nurse is wanted for it, by the gracious tenderness of God, of which little children's lives are so full, who should be engaged but the babe's own mother! One can imagine that it was almost as much pain as it was joy for the mother thus to have to nurse a child she knew was her own, and yet never to be permitted to teach it to call her mother, whilst Pharaoh's daughter claimed it as hers; but so it was, and in a royal palace the education of the future deliverer of Israel began.

The interest, however, of this verse in the Hebrews is that it adds to the narrative in Exodus one invaluable fact of which we should otherwise have known nothing: it tells us that Moses' parents were *religious parents*. "By faith," we read, "Moses was hid three months of his parents;" his concealment, that is, was not a purely instinctive act of parental affection; it had a religious basis; it was the result of "faith." We know, of course, too little of the characters of Amram and Jochebed, Moses' parents, to be able to say, with any confidence, in what way this act was an act of faith in God; it is sufficient to know it was such. Whether the story Josephus preserves have any glimmer of truth in it, that the birth of the child had been foretold to Amram as the future deliverer of Israel, and his parents, believing the prediction, determined at all risks to preserve the life of the child; or whether they concealed him, simply trusting that God who had given them so fair a child would save him from being destroyed, we cannot say. The act was an act of faith, and this young child, afterwards to become so mighty in his own faith in God, had therefore believing parents. A father's vows, or a mother's prayers, as in Samuel's case, may have preceded the birth of

Moses, and it is impossible for us to tell how much of the life-long fidelity to God that marked his whole career may have been owing to the fact that there had been implanted in him from his birth, and from before his birth, that of which these Old Testament histories speak so often, and of which we think so little, a "godly seed." Moses' God had been the "God of his father" (Exodus iii. 6).

This is the lesson this Golden Text ought to teach us. The influence of parents over their children is far profounder and more powerful than the influence of their example alone. An elder brother or sister may influence the younger members of the family by example quite as much, or nearly so, as the parents do; but the father's and mother's influence begins before the child is born. The springs of the child's moral not less than of its physical life rise in the parents, and may be poisoned or sweetened by causes that lie deep in the characters of the parents themselves. For however difficult it may be to harmonise the fact of inherited predispositions, and their formative power over the moral character, with the freedom of a child's will and his self-conscious responsibility before God, it remains nevertheless true that just as he resembles his parents in physical features, so he bears the likeness of either the beauty or the deformity of their moral features as well. We beget children "in our image."

Perhaps if Christian parents realised the certainty of this great moral law they would be less solicitous than they often appear to be for their children to "marry well;" or rather their one anxiety would be that they should "marry well," but "well" in a sense the world cares little for. The Christian Church has grievously neglected its duty in not more faithfully witnessing to the offence which, in the sight of God, the marriage of the godly and the ungodly must ever be. It may fairly be questioned whether the Church would not gain, far more than it would lose, if it resumed and re-asserted its ancient discipline—founded on the teaching of St. Paul—and refused to sanction, in any way, the "unequal" yoking together in marriage of believers with unbelievers.

But if this law adds, as it does, a new solemnity and greatness to the responsibility of the parent, let us not forget it is a law which, like all Divine laws, is not meant to work against us, but for us. The certainty of the transmission of moral qualities to our offspring is as blessed to the godly as it is terrible to the wicked. The "promise is to us and to our children," and remains, let us thank God, everlastingly true that "it shall go well with thee and thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord."

JULY 15.—“*Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.*”—Hebrews xi. 25.

This verse should be read in connection with the preceding and two following verses, all of which are illustrations and proofs of the greatness of the faith of Moses from the greatness of the sacrifice he made for the sake of the people of God. We must therefore understand the sacrifice before we can understand the faith that led to it.

Moses had become, to all intents and purposes, an Egyptian prince. He was looked upon as the adopted son of the daughter of Pharaoh. His name was Egyptian, and not Hebrew. He had received the highest education possible in those days, and had become “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.” The numberless inventions traditionally attributed to him, and the military skill he is said to have displayed in a campaign against the Ethiopians, are quite consistent with what Stephen says, that Moses was “mighty in words and in deeds.” The noblest career in the Egyptian state was before him, with the promise of wealth and power and greatness, but he sacrificed them all, and did so, the text tells us, deliberately.

“He *refused* to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,” so that the offer of remaining in the court as a royal prince was made to him, perhaps even urged upon him, but was rejected. Not only so; but he abandoned the wealth and ease of a life at court to cast in his lot with a hated and despised race; a race which at that very time—as all the Egyptian monumental records, as well as the account in Exodus, show—were slaves, and slaves held in an unusually bitter and degrading servitude. This, too, was done deliberately; it was Moses’ choice thus to give up the highest station for the lowest; he “*chose* rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.”

It cannot have been without meaning that the leader of the Old Covenant should have been called, at the commencement of his mission, to so great a sacrifice as this. The whole of this ancient history of the people of God, and not merely—as is too often imagined—the ceremonial and sacrifices of the law, was one prolonged prophecy of the great realities of the Gospel; and in this self-sacrifice of Moses we may see the type of the vaster sacrifice made by One greater than Moses, and who is the Prince and Saviour of the New Covenant. Jesus relinquished not an earthly court, but the glory of Heaven, for our sakes; He “emptied Himself,” as St. Paul says, “and took upon Him the form of a servant, and humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” And when we read of the sacrifice

of Moses, we may already hear "the reproach of Christ" in the court of Pharaoh in Egypt.

But what was the explanation and motive of this great self-denial? The text tells us in one word: it was Moses' "faith."

Consider what a great faith it must have been. Israel had no national history, no national greatness then. It was, as we have said, a race of degraded and despised slaves. It had no song of redemption behind it to illumine all its future with the glory of the presence of God; it had nothing but the sad and miserable record of a long servitude in Egypt, during which God seemed to have forsaken His people; but it is the peculiar faculty and prerogative of faith, as the first verse of this chapter assures us, to be "the demonstration of things not seen," to have eyes to see, behind the appearances of life, the real and eternal verities beneath them; and Moses had this faith. He saw in this race of slaves the people of God; he saw, because Israel was God's people, a future awaiting it of unspeakable honour and glory; and he "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." But the next verse in the Hebrews (v. 20) goes even beyond this. He "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." These words are very obscure, but they seem to hint to us that not only in all these ages before the Incarnation was the Lord Jesus Christ present with His people, as He is present with them now, suffering when they suffered, "in all their afflictions being afflicted," but that Moses himself, as his great forefather Abraham had done, "saw His day afar off, and was glad." And he "took joyfully" the sacrifice Christ laid upon him because to him, as to St. Paul in a later day, "the sufferings of this present time did not seem worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed."

How far the "recompence of the reward" referred to in the text was an eternal and future reward, we have no means of knowing; but in a land like Egypt, full of the belief in a future life, where every religious act, every symbol graven on its temples, had some reference to the belief, distorted and imperfect doubtless, of a state of reward or retribution beyond the grave, it would not be strange if the purer and more spiritual faith of Moses was already able to anticipate, in part, at least, "the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" which awaited those who esteemed the reproach and the afflictions of Christ "greater riches than the treasures of Egypt."

In all its essential elements this same choice between Israel and Egypt, the suffering affliction with the people of God, and "the pleasures of sin," or, in one word, between God and the world, has to be made by each one of us. Sooner or later, this alternative in one

form or other presents itself to every human soul ; and nothing but a faith like that of Moses will enable any one of us to choose aright. The postponement of the present to the future ; the valuing of the unseen more than the seen, and of the spiritual more than the material life ; the living, in one word, for God rather than for self, is possible only to faith ; and so life's earliest lesson begins where its latest ends, —in learning that "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

JULY 22.—"*I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face ; for he was afraid to look upon God.*"—Exodus iii. 6.

This verse has been rendered for ever memorable by the use our Lord made of it, in replying to the Sadducees, as the great proof of the Resurrection of the dead drawn from the old Testament Scriptures : "As touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" (Matt. xxii. 31, 32.) It is not strange the multitude were "astonished when they heard this," for the argument is so new and unsuspected, and yet so conclusive, that it still fills us with the same wonder at the depth and originality of Christ's interpretation of these words, and suggests to us what unexplored riches there may lie beneath the most familiar words of Scripture.

The whole chapter in the book of Exodus, from which this Golden Text is taken, is one of the great chapters of the Bible, and like the call of Abraham, or the giving of the law at Sinai, or the establishment of the kingdom in Canaan, forms one of the great critical epochs in the unfolding of the history of the old covenant. All that can be attempted in these brief notes, is to suggest what seems to be its meaning, leaving parents or teachers to expand these hints, if they think them worthy of it.

First of all it ought to be noticed that the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and the call of Moses as the deliverer, begin with the personal revelation of God to Moses. It is not without meaning that the history of the Exodus begins with the history of the burning bush. All the servants of God who have been called to any great work by Him, have commenced their work with the vision of God. Abraham, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, in the Old Testament, and St. Paul and St. John in the New, are illustrations of this great truth. And in the case of Israel the revelation of God was specially needed, not merely because there had been none for some hundreds of years, but because

the revolt in Egypt was emphatically a religious revolt, and the deliverance from Egypt was emphatically a Divine deliverance. It was a "Redemption," and the supernatural character of the redemption is stamped upon it from the very first.

And yet—and how significant it is—this revelation of God to Moses comes to him in the midst of his ordinary and daily work. It was as "he kept the flock of Jethro, his father," he suddenly beheld "this great sight" of the bush burning, but unconsumed, and heard the voice of God speaking to him out of the bush. It is a witness to the old but ever new truth, that the highest manifestations of God are not to be seen by those who "seek some great thing," but are to be found in the faithful performance of the "common round, the trivial task;" and that only those who are content thus to be "faithful in a very little," are ever called by God to "rule over ten cities."*

The successive stages in the revelation itself are equally significant. It begins, as all revelations of the Infinite to the finite must begin, with a symbol: "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." But the symbol passes into the higher spiritual truth it was meant to reveal. The fire becomes a voice. "God called unto Moses out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And He said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The lawgiver of the Old Covenant is learning its first lesson—the lesson of awe. Revelation begins with reverence.

But not of awe alone. For the next words of God, the words of our Golden Text, are a demand for trust, and the demand is founded on the history of the past: "I am the God of thy father"—the personal relation of God to Moses coming first, and the wider relation to the patriarchs now following—"and the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." But the pledge which the past relation of God to Israel affords of coming deliverance is now to be finally sealed by the Revelation of God, culminating in the communication of that awful and ineffable Name which at once shall declare His eternal unchangeableness as well as His eternal Being; the Name that for all the ages to come was to witness to the most sacred and tender relation of God to His people; the Name which no Jew ever dared to utter with his lips, lest he should be consumed, and which no Jewish scribe ever dared to write, without first lifting his pen from the scroll, and as he

* Compare the beautiful lines at the close of "The Holy Grail," beginning "And some among you held."

dipped it freshly in the ink, devoutly breathing a prayer for mercy—the name of JEHOVAH.

One last and solemn act in this revelation of the name of God has yet to be accomplished. The New Covenant Name must be solemnly affixed to the ancient patriarchal title of God, as the sign to Israel that all that was precious in the dealings of God with their fathers may be looked for in His coming dealings with them. And therefore Moses is commanded to go forth with this as his first message to his people—at once the pledge of his own commission and of the changeless faithfulness and pity of God—"Jehovah God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you."

Such, in brief, was the revelation of God to Moses. And it had the moral effects upon him that the vision of God always has on His servants. It makes him just as humble in the presence of God, as it makes him strong in the presence of man. Before God Moses "hides his face" and is "afraid to look upon God," and imploringly deprecates his being entrusted with a mission for which he confesses himself profoundly unworthy. Before Pharaoh he is as "bold as a lion;" he has lost all the former timidity and fear of man which, forty years before, had sent him flying a fugitive from the wrath of the king, into the land of Midian, and with a voice as of thunder, he utters the command to Pharaoh, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go." The figure of Moses that the genius of Michael Angelo has sculptured, and which in stern and awful grandeur frowns down upon the beholder from the walls of *S. Pietro in Vinculi* in Rome, looking as strong and unyielding as the rock from which it was hewn, is only the image of what "the meekest men above all men that are on the face of the earth," may become under the vision of God. It is the sublimest illustration in the Old Testament of the experience St. Paul has recorded in the New, as the crowning revelation of the Lord Jesus to himself, "He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness;" and it teaches even the humblest and the weakest among us how he may say, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

JULY 29.—"*Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.*"—Jeremiah i. 8.

Real greatness is always humble. It is true the old Pagan conception of humility as synonymous with baseness or littleness of nature still lingers among us; but nothing can be more utterly false, both to the ethics of the Gospel and to the facts of human life. True humility is a sign, not of degradation, but of elevation of character; for just as it is

the most learned men who are most conscious of the smallness of their knowledge compared with the vast and limitless regions that lie before them—the shallow socialist being always vain because he is shallow—so it is only those who have been longest “pressing toward the mark” who feel, with St. Paul, how far they are from “attaining” it or being “already perfect.” It is the seraphim who stand nearest the throne who cover their faces with their wings as they cry, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts.”

The reluctance of Moses to undertake the work to which God had called him—and it is to this part of the history in Exodus (ch. iv. 1-17) our Golden Text is prefixed—is a conspicuous illustration of the truth, that the highest forms of moral greatness of character, as well as unusual capacity both of mind and of will, produce the profoundest humility and self-distrust. God had, as we have just seen, supernaturally appeared to Moses in the unconsumed burning bush; had already given to him a special “token” that He would be with him in his mission to the children of Israel and to Pharaoh—and this in answer to his own distrust of himself; had revealed to him His glorious and ineffable love, “I am that I am,” as the name by which God was to be known to His people “unto all generations;” and had finally assured Moses that they should “hearken to his voice,” and that He “would stretch out His hand and smite Egypt with all His wonders,” and that “afterwards Pharaoh would let Israel go.” Notwithstanding all this—token, revelation, assurance, heaped one upon the other—Moses still hesitates. He even questions God’s declaration, and doubts whether Israel would “believe him or hearken to his voice.” But God is very patient with His servant, and as if to remove the last possibility of doubt, either in Moses or in Israel, He gives to Him three miraculous signs, ever memorable for being the first appearance of a “miracle” in the history of the revelation of God to the world, and each one of which, like all the miracles of the Bible, is not a mere wonder, but is called “a sign,” having a “voice,” being a revelation, that is, of supernatural truth, as well as a display of supernatural power. Even these do not overcome the diffidence and reluctance of Moses; and he now pleads a new excuse, that he has no gifts of speech, being “slow of speech and of a slow tongue”—an incapacity curiously often found accompanying the greatest powers of generalship—a plea which is at once met by the promise, “Go, and I will be with thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt say.” It seems impossible that there could have been any further hesitation after such an assurance—and we may be sure that if this history had been the product of a later age, as modern rationalistic criticism assumes it was, there would have been found none—but there is, and it shows itself in the forced and depre-

cating acquiescence of the reply of Moses: "Oh, my Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send." It is true this leads to the appointment of Aaron as the spokesman for his brother, but it is none the less true that this prolonged reluctance of Moses to accept and to commence his great work—a reluctance doubtless arising from his deep sense of unfitness and unworthiness for such a task—kindled against him "the anger of the Lord."

And this is the real peril of humility. It is well to distrust self, but distrust of self may pass into distrust of God, as it did in the case of Moses; and the moment it does so, humility itself becomes a sin. There is a point after which any hesitancy or unwillingness to obey God's call ceases to honour God, and is a sign rather of weakness of faith in Him than of real humility. For true humbleness of mind, or distrust of self, may stand trembling before its task, but it is only that it may "lift up its eyes unto the hills whence cometh its help," at once bravely to undertake the work to which God has called it, saying as it does so, "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me."

The only safeguard against this danger arising out of a rare and precious virtue—and sometimes the rarest virtues bring us very near to danger—is to be found in the words of the text. First, let us be sure the work is God's work, and not our own, to which we are called; and then, assured of this, we are to leave all the difficulties and dangers of the work to Him to deal with. No man ever had a deeper sense of his own inadequacy to bear the vast responsibility laid upon him than Luther, as witness the agony of prayer through which he passed on the morning of his appearance before Charles V.; but Luther cast his responsibilities and his work, with all its care, upon God; and, in the face of all his foes, and of what was still harder to fight against, his own sense of weakness, he dared to say, "I will confess Christ in Behemoth's mouth, between his great teeth."

Sometimes children are called by God to confess Christ where confession is just as hard for them as it was for Luther in a much larger sphere; or they are entrusted with a work almost as great for the little hands which have to do it as Moses' work was for him. To be the one Christian child in the home; to serve the Lord Jesus in the school, surrounded by the sneers and taunts of those who care nothing for Him; or to have to begin the great journey of life all alone, with no father's care or mother's love to make its "rough places plain;"—these are heavy burdens for a little child to bear; but the promise is to them, as much as to the prophets of the Lord, "Be not afraid . . . for I am with thee, to deliver thee, saith the Lord."

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CHURCH ADMINISTRATION.

IV.—CHURCH DISCIPLINE AND BUSINESS. INTERCOMMUNION OF CHURCHES. THE CHURCH AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS.

THERE is no duty more solemn or difficult—and yet none more obligatory on the Church of Christ, than the maintenance of a holy and healthy discipline, for the preservation of purity of doctrine and life. As the word is usually understood, it consists in the consideration and adjudication of error, in creed or conduct. Cases of the former kind are rare among the Free Churches of this land. Although they are without a fixed creed, of human compilation, they yet hold tenaciously and intelligently the essential truths of the Gospel, as they are found in the pages of the Word of God. A departure from fundamental evangelical doctrines, by any who have once professed them, is almost always followed by a departure from the people who firmly hold them ; so that the renunciators adjudge their own case. If, however, they still retain their membership, notwithstanding the surrender of some cardinal truths, and do not hesitate to avow the change, and perhaps strive to spread around them what are held to be unscriptural views, then the peace and spiritual life of the Church, and the real good of the offending parties, require that notice be taken of it. This can hardly be done by the many ; and the most fitting persons to take up the matter are, unquestionably, the spiritual leader and teacher of the Church, the minister, with one or more of the most intelligent deacons joined with him. These should see and converse with the offender. If he be dealt with kindly, scripturally, efficiently, the probabilities are that he will be led to see his error, and recant. If he do not, he must be urged voluntarily to withdraw, that scandal may not accrue to the Church through him. If he refuse, and a schismatic spirit be manifested, there is no alternative but to decline to hold fellowship with him. The duty is plain, however painful it may be. “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.”

Error in conduct is more common than lapse in creed, and has to be dealt with faithfully, yet tenderly. If the offender continue in membership, as is not uncommon, the wrong-doing must be pointed out. Calm and lengthened thought, patient and prayerful investigation into alleged faults, and the exercise of a judicial fairness, are essential in dealing with such transgressors. The injunction of Scripture, as to the course which should be pursued, when, “in the name of the Lord Jesus

Christ, His people are gathered together" for this very purpose, must be implicitly obeyed.

Unquestionable deviations from honesty and honourableness, from righteousness and holiness,—things that sully the fair fame of the Church of Christ, that fling a stain upon the escutcheon of Christianity,—must be severely rebuked. If the offence has been before all, so must the censure be. Other, and lower forms of impropriety of behaviour had best be dealt with according to the instructions of the Master—reserving extreme dealing for incorrigible cases: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And, if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but, if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." The profound wisdom and knowledge of human nature, which this counsel of the Lord shows, cannot be too highly extolled.

Although there exists no machinery by which the spiritual censures of any one of our Churches can be carried out, save that which abides within itself, and which consists solely of moral and spiritual influences and action, yet it is rarely found ineffective. If it do not result in bringing the offender to a right state of mind, and to a godly repentance, which is the end ever to be aimed at—for severance from Church fellowship is a serious thing—yet it does terminate in the removal of the offending member, and so tend to the preservation of the spiritual health of the rest of the body.

No meetings are more solemn—certainly none more sad—than those in which the last step in the process of discipline has to be taken, and an erring brother or sister has to be removed. But as the excision is an absolute necessity laid upon the Church, from which it must not shrink, it has to be done, not with fierce fulminations and invective, as if either ministers or members who take part in such an act of painful discipline were themselves immaculate, but rather in the spirit of the Master, who wept over the transgressors of Jerusalem, or that of the Apostle who, when he had to deal with the enemies of the Cross of Christ, did so "even weeping;" and with fervent prayer for the reclamation of the erring one, and an earnest desire for such signs of penitence and reformation as would justify his re-introduction to all the privileges he had forfeited—"restoring such an one in the spirit of meekness."

Transference of membership.—The removal of our people from one locality to another generally necessitates a removal from one congregation to another, and letters dismissory are usually sought for and given,

that fellowship with the visible Church may be preserved and perpetuated. As such letters are really attestations of Christian character, they should ever be honest and faithful expressions of the estimate in which such friends are held.

It would be well if ministers were, from time to time, to refer distinctly to the importance of seeking, *as speedily as possible*, a new spiritual home, when their members go to reside in a new locality; and the wisdom of identifying themselves with the nearest minister and people, schools and institutions, with which they can, with comfort and edification, form a connection. Many, especially in large cities, would thus be prevented from drifting again into the current of the world, and perhaps making "shipwreck of faith and a good conscience." A kind message or letter, now and then, between those who had sustained the relationship of pastor and flock, when it has been severed by a removal, may prove of essential service, in strengthening the weak, confirming the wavering, soothing the sorrowful, and stimulating to holy perseverance and fidelity those to whom the spiritual recollections of the past are very fragrant, and over whom the memory of familiar forms and voices, and teachings, when thus kept up, may still exercise a most salutary influence.

Church business.—All matters of business, apart from the purely spiritual concerns of the Church, whether relating to pecuniary affairs, or otherwise, should be left to the management of the adult members. We have, happily, a large number of young people in fellowship with us; but it is not seemly or wise that in matters of finance, and in the consideration and adjudication of questions requiring wisdom, experience, and thoughtfulness, the votes of those scarcely in their teens should be taken, as if the same value were to be attached to the judgment of youths and maidens—which, from their unacquaintedness with much of the business of life, must be necessarily immature—as would be accorded to that of the older members of the Church. Practically, I do not think that much difficulty, if any, arises on such subjects. It would be a very rare, if not an unlikely, thing for the young to insist upon having an equal voice and vote with their elders on mere business matters; this would indicate a defective training. The ordinary deference of the former to the latter, which religion distinctly inculcates, should surely be conspicuously displayed in connection with these administrative affairs.

In the choice of deacons and pastors, unquestionably all the members, unless mere children, should give expression to their wishes,*

* I venture to think that the Churches which limit the franchise to members over twenty-one years of age, do wisely.—EDITOR.

after due efforts have been made to place the whole matter before them in all its serious and solemn aspects. Counsel and prayer, a lengthened consideration of the subject, and the judgment of their elders, kindly and faithfully conveyed to them, will greatly help the younger members to arrive at a wise decision.*

The Church and its affiliated institutions.—I have referred to the desirableness of a close connection of the Church with the various institutions which are found associated with our places of worship, but one word more may perhaps be permitted. Too often this connection is nominal, and the majority of our people rest satisfied with a subscription or donation to the various objects that, from time to time, solicit their sympathy and assistance. But this is a grievous mistake. One cause of the comparative indifference of many, to these auxiliary movements for the furtherance of the cause of Christ, is the absence of all information relative to their working. It is most desirable that reports, brief, but sufficiently explanatory, should be sent, from time to time, by the secretary of these societies, direct to the Church, to be read at its meetings. Some Sunday-schools do this quarterly; and the hearts of the members are stirred up; and cheered, or depressed, as the case may be, by intelligence of what is going on.

Sympathy and prayer are thus awakened, and the real connection of the Church with such institutions is continually pressed upon its attention, so that it is inexcusable if no interest be taken in them.

Yearly retrospect.—The last Church meeting of the year is a good opportunity for a *résumé* of the chief encouraging or discouraging occurrences of the period just passing away; an announcement of the number of members admitted, of the deaths that have taken place, and of those who have been transferred, during the year. Subjects for reflection and prayer will be sure thus to present themselves; and a special opportunity be afforded for pressing upon members the duty of affectionate sympathy with one another, as well as of interest in the welfare of other Churches, near to their own; and in the whole family of God throughout the world.

* I omitted in the proper place to advert to the election of deacons, and to consider the question—Which was the best; a choice for a year, a term of years, or permanently? On this matter, as on others, diversity of opinion and action exists. In my own Church there are always five permanent officers, while four others are elected every three years. When a vacancy occurs in the former by death, removal, or resignation, it is filled up by a vote of the Church from the four, triennially elected; so that there are always the same number on the permanent staff. The elections are by ballot, after nomination.

Occasional communion.—One subject that is deserving the attention of our Churches is the propriety or impropriety of admitting to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper those who are not members of any Church, by a formal profession, but who might still desire to be participants in such a service. If this be done with a careful "fencing of the table," as our Scotch friends phrase it, it may at times prove of essential service.

At the close of 1876, as the last day happened to be the Sabbath, at the suggestion of one of my deacons, and with the cordial concurrence of the rest, and of the members of the Church, it was resolved to hold a sacramental service in connection with the midnight prayer-meeting, which we have held for years past, in common with others, to bid farewell to the old year and welcome the new. To this special service it was resolved to invite *all* to come whose hearts inclined them to observe it; while the ordinary evening sermon had special reference to the subject, and was explanatory and cautionary; so that the act should at least be intelligently done by those who ventured to present themselves.

On this occasion many came who had never partaken of the Lord's Supper before; and the hallowed impressions produced thereby led no less than eleven persons to offer themselves, the following month, for Church membership. They had been restrained by timidity and fears—most of which they found to be groundless; while some of these proved to be Christians, ripe with years of experience, whom it was a privilege and joy to welcome, as fellow-heirs of the grace of God.

Intercommunion of Churches.—The desirableness of the mutual recognition of Churches, by some special services from time to time, must commend itself to every true Christian. Such a course has been attended with the happiest results. Several congregations in one locality—not merely those of our own faith and order, but others, that hold the great doctrines of Evangelical truth—have combined together to testify the real oneness of the people of God, notwithstanding diversities of administration, and perhaps, in some cases, of creed, on minor points of doctrine. These gatherings have been seasons of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord;" and have offered to the world without such an illustration of the goodness and pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity, that it has had a potent, though silent, influence in disarming prejudice, and in correcting prevalent mistakes, as to the supposed antagonism of differing religious communities; proclaiming, as with a trumpet voice, the belief entertained by the people of God, that "one is their Master, even Christ, and all they are brethren." Such services afford opportunity for bearing an unmistakable testimony to the desire of true

Christians to show a practical sympathy with their Divine Master, whose prayer, with the shadow of the cross falling on His Spirit, was, "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee : that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me."

That glorious fact, and the momentous truths associated with it, the world will never know, or, at least, believe, until much more than at present has been done, with one heart and one voice to glorify God, by exhibiting "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The Church and public questions.—There are questions of a public nature constantly coming up, bearing on the moral health and social well-being of the community—some in which our national honour and influence are perilled—on which the voice of the Church should be heard. Without derogating from the truly spiritual constitution and action of any religious community, there should ever be a recognition of the fact that there are many points of contact with the world without, from which, as Christian men, not only ought we not to shrink, but should rather heartily ally ourselves to them.

It is to be feared that the narrow exclusiveness of some Churches,—bordering closely on a selfish love of ease,—and their apparent unconcern in relation to important subjects that are agitating the public mind and which come home to the hearts of the mass of the community, have often created, especially among the poor, a prejudice against religion and its advocates. Happily, of late years, the Churches have been foremost in the work of philanthropy ; and attention to educational and sanitary, and even certain political measures, is found to be as much a part of their duty as others, more directly bearing upon spiritual matters. We should aim to keep up a succession of men, like the children of Issachar, who "had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do."

Public conferences on grave national questions are sometimes imperative, in order that the voice of the Christian community may be heard, in its clear, ringing, and unmistakable tones. For these gatherings there should be chosen, as delegates, some of the best men of our Churches, who are distinguished by their intelligence, piety, and position. A good use may be made of these conferences by faithful reports being borne back to the Churches delegating ; and the pulsations of the great heart of representative assemblies be thus reproduced at the remotest extremities of the body. No fear of being branded as "political Dissenters"—though we have yet to learn what dishonour can really attach to such a designation, when political Churchmen abound by the million—should deter us from taking our part in the honest and vigorous expression of opinion on vital questions.

I have thus endeavoured briefly to advert to the principal matters connected with the administration of our Churches, recording, in these four or five articles, the results of some years' experience and observation. The perusal of what has been written may be suggestive, if nothing more of benefit be produced. The order of the Churches has a good deal to do with their health and usefulness ; and nothing which can conduce to these should be regarded as unworthy of consideration by ministers and people. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together." With prayer for its peace, let there be a due attention given to the administration of its affairs ; and with the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, accompanying the faithful preaching of the Gospel, there will be the prosperity every true Israelite desires. The foundations of the Church are in the holy mountains, and, so fixed, she shall abide for ever. "The Highest Himself shall establish her." "Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord : O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity."

T. W. AVELING.

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

THE past month has furnished fresh illustrations of the difficulties by which the Establishment is surrounded, and of the incapacity of the Primate for dealing with them. His Grace has certainly developed a new and unexpected genius for comedy, and has thereby raised a laugh in which even that devoted Erastian the *Spectator*, ever so willing to applaud whatever Bishops do in the interests of the Establishment, has been compelled to join. But it is open to question whether this is the gift most necessary for a ruler of the Church at the present crisis, and whether its exhibition in the case of Mr. Ridsdale has not excited a latent contempt in the minds of numbers, the effect of which will certainly not be favourable to the institution in whose defence the Primate has stooped so low. On that point we have spoken fully elsewhere. The Archbishop's mistake in this Folkestone affair has, however, hardly been so serious as the mode in which he treated Lord Redesdale's interpellation on the "Priest in the Confessional." That it should be possible for a number of Anglican clergymen to give such a book any endorsement is itself a disquieting circumstance, and a proof of the corrupting influence which Tractarianism has exerted on our religious instructors. That the Archbishop should have treated such a fact so lightly is a far more portentous phenomenon, but that the people of England could be soothed by his easy words, and treat the whole affair with indifference, would be the most alarming feature of the

whole. The simple fact is that a book which the Attorney-General describes as "obscene and disgusting" was prepared by an Anglican clergyman for the use of confessors, that it has been in circulation among clergymen for some years, and that more recently it has had the sanction of the clerical body called the "Society of the Holy Cross," of which Mr. Mackonochie is President, Mr. Orby Shipley Assessor, and several well-known Ritualist priests, including Mr. Arthur Tooth, are officials.

The book must be regarded, therefore, as bearing the imprimatur of the Ritualist school. The "Society of the Holy Cross," is, we suppose, of very recent date, as the *Morning Post* of September 7, 1876, from which Lord Harrowby quoted, describes it as being new. But the book was issued long before, and yet the Archbishop, while speaking of it as "a very serious and important matter," said that it was "owing to the courtesy of the noble Earl (Redesdale) that his attention was drawn to it very lately." All we can say is, that if Dr. Tait did not know of it, he ought to have done. Granted that amid the multitude of his occupations the advertisements of it might have escaped his notice, some of the champions of Protestantism might have directed his attention to it. What is the Church Association worth, if it could allow a work of this character to be circulated among the clergy for years, without bringing it under the eye of the ruler of the Church? The first part has never been difficult to obtain, and in it there was an intimation that priests alone might have a second part, in which were the directions for their conduct as confessors. Nor is this the only work of the kind that has been published. There is a book for the young which is only a shade better, and indeed, considering that it is to be put into the hands of young people, is in one aspect worse. It is doubly strange, therefore, that an announcement so suspicious did not catch the eye of either the Association or of the Archbishop, and that this revolting manual should have been in circulation for years without any rebuke to those who had fastened on their Church so grave a scandal. But even when it has been exposed, we look in vain to the Primate for the indignant denunciation which might have been anticipated, and which had a place even in the speech of Sir John Holker. We make some allowance for the influence of the serener atmosphere of the Upper House which led the Primate to think that he had spoken very strongly when he said: "I cannot imagine that any right-minded man could wish to have such questions addressed to any member of his family, and if he had any reason to suppose that any member of his family had been exposed to such an examination, I am sure it would be the duty of any father of a family to remonstrate with the clergyman who had put the question, and warn him never to approach his house again." A man

must have been a long time under an enervating discipline before he could fancy that this is strong language. The majority of fathers would regard it as mildness itself, and we sincerely caution any Ritualist priests who may calculate on such a remonstrance and warning as that of which the Primate speaks as the worst consequences likely to follow such atrocious conduct on their part, against being thus misled. It is far from impossible that an outraged parent might, under such circumstances, take the law into his own hands, and the public would certainly applaud him for such a decision. But there is a further question to which the Archbishop did not refer, that is more serious. It is that which was put by the late Dr. Jelf, himself a High Churchman of the old school, in the one significant word "*Quousque?*" No doubt "right-minded fathers" (to use the Archbishop's own words) will warn these prying confessors off their premises, but how long is their presence to be tolerated in the national Church? Are there no "right-minded" Bishops, who will undertake the task of putting down the evil? Or are we for ever to be quieted by soothing assurances that "the persons represented by this book are very few indeed"?

The Bishop of Durham said, with considerable truth, the other day, that "there is a growing feeling among the laity which is leading them to ask whether the Church is worth preserving as an Establishment when there is so much unfaithfulness to her teaching among the clergy;" adding that in London he heard again and again in Church circles, "we should be more safe, perhaps we shall have our Prayer-book better preserved and our services more in harmony with our feelings and with the purity of the Church of England, if Disestablishment and Disendowment were carried out." Such language is not often heard from the lips of an Evangelical Bishop, for the prelates of this school are generally extreme optimists. But Dr. Baring is a bold and courageous, as well as sincerely pious man, and is evidently too anxious about the tendencies which are every day becoming stronger in the Establishment, to indulge in the pleasant and plausible talk which is only too common. While he, on the one side, sees that the Establishment is imperilled by the action of the clergy, his brethren at Ely and Winchester are more anxious about the encroachments of the secular power. The institution is thus between a cross fire, and both of the great antagonistic parties begin to doubt whether their own views will not be better promoted by its overthrow than by its continuance under present conditions, or under any changed conditions to which the nation is at all likely to assent. Each party, in truth, is strong enough to hold the other in check, but not to assert its own will. The priests cannot be put down without the collapse of the system, and the same result would follow if they were to

conform the Church to their ideal. Hence the complaints from opposite quarters, which at first sight seem so contradictory, but which really point to the same fact, that the sacerdotal spirit has become so powerful and so defiant as to render the maintenance of the present compromise impossible. This is what Bishop Baring means when he expresses his "firm belief that for the next two or three years it rests with the clergy whether Disestablishment and Disendowment shall not be brought about." When, on the other side, Ritualist priests and laymen tell us it is for the Bishops or Parliament to decide by their conduct this knotty point, they are so far in perfect harmony, that both feel the tension of the present state of things to be intolerable, and insist upon a change. Of course each party thinks that the change necessary is the more complete development of its own theory; but to us it is more important to note that both refuse to acquiesce in the *status quo*, while every impartial observer outside feels that in it is the one chance of preserving the Establishment. If the Evangelicals had had more backbone this point would have been reached long since, but they have been so well satisfied to proclaim the Protestantism of the Church while their enemies have been so busy in making it "Catholic" that to-day the Evangelical boast sounds like a bitter mockery. Even now it is only the laity of whom the Bishop speaks as being roused to a sense of the danger, and a resolution to accept the policy by which alone it can be averted. That the clergy will profit by the warning of his Lordship, and by repenting of their lawless ways save the Establishment, does not seem very probable. So recently as the middle of last month Mr. Mackonochie and Mr. Stanton, at the Dedication festival of St. Alban's, once more exhibited their contempt of the law, and despite Lord Redesdale's exposures, which had been made two or three nights previous, the latter gloried in the fact that all the members of the assembled guilds practised confession. We understand this courageous loyalty to conscience, and can respect its motives when we cannot approve its modes of action. But to talk of "persecution" because the law will not allow State officials to follow out their own private devices is absurd. If it were a question of individual right we should guard the liberties of Ritualists as jealously as we defend our own. But it is not essential to liberty that a clergyman should have the status of a Government official. We should be distressed if the English people were to be misled by priestcraft, but if it be so, so much the worse for the people. But it is certainly not an act of persecution to insist that the priests, who are bent on establishing this power over them, shall not be strengthened by enjoying special privileges as the clergy of the National Church. That Church has its laws, and it is no persecution to enforce them on those who desire the advantages it gives.

The very clergy who are so anxious to enjoy an unwarrantable licence themselves are not disposed to relax a single point of their unjust supremacy over Dissenters. The "E. C. U." was not more earnest to set aside the law, so far as it might restrain Ritualist clergymen, than to maintain it in all its severity as against Nonconformists, and their demand for admission to the national graveyards. The Archbishop's willingness to make a concession to the latter seemed to be quite as offensive as his attitude towards the former, and even his readiness to use the dispensing power which Mr. Ridsdale had assigned him to cover a Ritualist retreat was not accepted as a compensation for his weakness in proposing to dispense with the restrictions which at present prevent the Nonconformist minister from officiating in the national burial-grounds. "When we find," said Dr. West, "the Archbishop of Canterbury, who sits in the House of Lords as one of the representatives of the Church, cutting the ground from under their feet, this is a peril to be feared much more than all the Privy Council judgments." This was said in reference to a clause allowing a separate service for the unbaptized; and if so simple an act as this provoked such indignation, what must the effect have been of the Primate's liberal and statesmanlike advocacy of the concession which Lord Harrowby's motion proposed? But above all, with what feelings must these clerical bigots have received the tidings that the House of Lords had pronounced decidedly against them and their arrogant assumptions? The vote of June 18th, in which Conservative peers threw off all control and followed out their own sense of right, in opposition to the Government they support and the great majority of the bench of Bishops, is as the handwriting on the wall. It means more than appears, on the surface. It is an expression of the irritation which the clergy have produced, and is doubtless meant to convey a rebuke to them. Of course the Ministry had to withdraw the Bill. They could not pass it without Lord Harrowby's clause, for the vote of the Peers had been given too deliberately to admit a hope that it might be reversed, even if the Commons could be induced to strike out the obnoxious provision and give their Lordships another opportunity for reconsideration. On the other hand, they dare not accept it in the face of an infuriated clergy who do not spare their own Bishops, and would be still less likely to forgive Ministers, should they yield. But Mr. Osborne Morgan has now the next move, and we wait to see what fate his resolution will meet with in the House. That he will succeed is too much to hope, but he may furnish another evidence of what becomes clearer continually: that as nothing so unites the Liberal party, so nothing is so fruitful a cause of divisions among the Conservatives as these ecclesiastical questions.

The three Presbyterian Assemblies of Scotland have attracted special attention this year, owing to the widespread agitation of thought in the country on theological questions, and the difficulties it is creating in relation to the theological standards common to all the Churches. In the present condition of the Anglican Church, and the increasing probabilities of Disestablishment, the way in which the growing demand for greater freedom would be met by the State Church on the one hand, and the two free Presbyterian communities on the other, has naturally excited considerable curiosity. It is, we need hardly say, a favourite argument of Erastians that freedom of religious thought can only be enjoyed under an Establishment, and it was too hastily assumed that the proceedings of the Scotch Churches would supply fresh evidence in support of this view. But the very opposite has been the case. Whereas in the General Assembly of the Established Church there has been the most striking manifestation of narrow and strait-laced orthodoxy, in the Free Church Assembly there has been a display of liberality as surprising as it is significant, and the United Presbyterian Synod has shown more breadth and more sympathy with the spirit of the age than either of the others. In the first, Dr. Story, of Roseneath, proposed to alter the terms in which the elders give their adhesion to the Westminster Confession, by giving them a more general character. It was but a very small change, but it was too large to be entertained by a body which, as it enjoys the benefit of the liberalising influences of State connection, ought, on the Erastian theory, to have been more generous and accommodating. A very curious comment is made on the proceedings by the correspondent of the *Guardian*, who, speaking of the merriment caused by one of Dr. Story's illustrative incidents, says: "We cannot understand how the fact of a man putting his name to a number of most solemn propositions on the gravest subjects that can occupy the human mind without even taking the trouble to read them can, with propriety, be considered a subject for laughter. This seems to be an indication of what is at present one of the most serious dangers for Scotland, namely a tendency to reject in an airy and inconsiderate manner the Calvinism (and we fear a great deal more than the Calvinism) embodied in the Old Confession without adopting anything definite in its place." We fully share the feeling, but we should have thought that an English Churchman, with a conscience so just and so sensitive, might have found enough nearer home to disturb his peace without laying on his righteous soul the burdens of Scotch Presbyterianism. The Free Church had a more difficult matter to deal with in the case of Dr. Walter Smith, whose "higher criticism" has led to results which some orthodox divines regard with intense anxiety. Yet the Doctor had the support of some of the best men in the Assembly, and the vote by which he is suspended during the inquiry which he himself

courted is in no sense to be regarded as hostile. The United Presbyterian Synod actually adopted a motion in favour of a revision of the Standards; not indeed in the sense of Mr. Macrae's original proposal, but with a distinct view of change. We cannot deal here with the theological points raised, but we note these unexpected developments as a refutation of much loose talk among ourselves. In Scotland, at all events, thought is freest where the Church is least under the control of the State, and organised most thoroughly on the basis of liberty.

BOOKS ON THE TABLE.

MR. URWICK'S book on the *Servant of Jehovah** will be welcomed by all those who are interested in the exegetical questions of the Old Testament, as a concise and compendious summary of modern criticism concerning the authorship of the later chapters of the Book of Isaiah, and especially the great Messianic prophecy of the fifty-third chapter. The author speaks in his preface of the attempt to eliminate from the Old Testament the idea of a suffering Messiah, and of the "growing tendency on the part of many modern Jews and Christians to join hands at Calvary, by mutually toning down the old austerities alike of Scripture Judaism and New Testament Christianity—the doctrines, namely, of human sin and guilt on the one hand, and of expiation by sacrifice on the other." And his book is practically a vindication against modern criticism of the genuineness of Isaiah xl. to lxvi., and of the Messianic reference of the fifty-third chapter. Minute Hebrew criticism on points of this nature is impossible in the pages of this magazine; and it may suffice to state that these questions are dealt with ably, concisely, and satisfactorily in the first ninety-five pages of the book. Then follows an exhaustive commentary, grammatical and critical, on Isaiah lii. 13 to liii. 12. This part of the book combines in a most curious manner "milk for babes" (in Hebrew), with "strong meat for men." The lazy exegetical student will find every word minutely parsed, and in some cases its history from its very babyhood traced out. But on the other hand, there is a mass of carefully-collected and judiciously-arranged critical material in this commentary which will make it valuable to exegetical scholars. The combination of elementary remarks on ordinary Hebrew forms of words with somewhat elaborate and abstruse criticism, looks odd: those who need the former will not appreciate the latter, those who appreciate the latter will get impatient with the former.

* *The Servant of Jehovah.* By WILLIAM URWICK, M.A. T. & T. Clarke, Edinburgh, pp. 192. (Price 6s.)

But, nevertheless, the book perhaps becomes the more useful as meeting the requirements of two different classes of readers.

The consideration of these subjects brings the author face to face with the ideas involved in "Atonement;" and he appropriately concludes his book by a note on the distinction between sin-offerings and trespass-offerings in Leviticus. He maintains that "both the *sin-offering* and *guilt-offering* had to do with, and were expiatory offerings for, real sins, and that by means of them, by God's appointment, the guilty Israelite obtained the forgiveness of sins:" the distinction between them is that "the *sin-offering* set forth PROPITIATION, the *guilt-offering* typified SATISFACTION." In Isaiah's great prophecy the Servant of Jehovah appears in both these aspects; He bore the iniquity of us all, becoming a sin-offering for us; and He is the pure and spotless One, without deceit or violence—the "righteous Servant" who makes His soul a "guilt-offering of infinite value. In the sin-offering the value of the victim was regarded as unessential; if the offerer could not bring a lamb, two pigeons would suffice. But in the guilt-offering, absolute satisfaction—without blemish and without spot—was essential. Christ, the suffering Messiah, combined both. In the discussion of these points, Mr. Urwick objects to the position taken in the Congregational Lectures on the Atonement that "no sacrifice secured forgiveness for specific moral offences." It is not unnatural for us to think that the Congregational lecturer has the best of the argument. In conclusion, we heartily commend the book to the consideration of our readers.

*German Love** is one of the loveliest love-stories ever written, exquisite in feeling and thought, and perfect in its literary form.

Mr. Barclay's *Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*† is intended to be an historical illustration of the great truths which many Congregationalists are apt to forget, that religious isolation is perilous to the life of the soul, and that according to the Divine idea the Church, as an organised society, is a Divine institution for the salvation of man. The book is the result of the laborious research of many years. We could have spared the chapters on the history of the obscure sects which sprang into existence on the Continent during the fierce heats of the Reformation; but the illustrations which the author has given of the inner history of Quakerism in England from the time of George Fox down to our own days are very valuable.

* *German Love*. By F. MAX MÜLLER. London: William Mullin & Son. (Price 5s.)

† *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*. By ROBERT BARCLAY. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price £1 4s.)

MRS. WOOD* has written a short treatise on how to "train up a child in the way he should go." It is stale, flat, and unprofitable: to which may be added, priggish, preachy, and dictatorial: a book which every sensible mother would resent, and from which none but a feeble-minded mother could suck the smallest advantage. Mrs. Henry Wood, notably the author of "East Lynne," is accustomed to mix her novelistic talk and incident with the most uncalled-for and unsavoury religious medicine: here any anxious searcher may find all such medicine concentrated in one bolus.

Among the pamphlets on our table are Mr. Henry Richard's very able address at the Congregational Union, which contains a large mass of valuable information on the *Relations of the Temporal and Spiritual Powers in the Different Nations of Europe*; † a vigorous and painstaking essay on Disestablishment, by the Rev. Thomas S. Dickson, of Auchterarder,‡ in which the Scriptural argument in favour of Establishments is admirably discussed; an interesting address by Mr. Alderman Andrewes, of Reading, delivered from the chair of the Berks, South Oxon, and South Bucks Association;§ we observe that Mr. Andrewes objects to "letting out the seats in our places of worship at so much per foot." We have also *Papers on Psalmody*, by Mr. Curwen,|| originally published in the *English Independent*. Mr. Curwen gives an account of the psalmody in the Foundling Chapel, Regent Square Church, Kensington Chapel, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Union Chapel Islington, Surrey Chapel, the City Temple, the Weigh House, and Christ Church Westminster Road, and adds some practical suggestions. Mr. John Wilkinson writes a pamphlet to prove that Englishmen are not Israelites,¶—a very superfluous argument. He informs us that in some book which he has read a gentleman asserts, or rather attempts to demonstrate, "that our coronation-stone at Westminster was *formerly* Jacob's pillow, and was brought from Palestine by Jeremiah the prophet, as part of his personal

* *Our Children*. By MRS. HENRY WOOD, Author of "East Lynne," &c. London: Daldy, Isbister, & Co. (Price 1s.)

† *The Relations of the Temporal and Spiritual Powers in the Different Nations of Europe*. By HENRY RICHARD, M.P. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price 6d.)

‡ *Civil Establishments of Christianity Indefensible*. By Rev. THOMAS S. DICKSON, M.A. Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Co. (Price 6d.)

§ *Church Life and Organisation*. An Address by ALDERMAN ANDREWES. Reading: Barcham & Beecroft.

|| *Papers on Psalmody*. By J. SPENCER CURWEN. London: J. Curwen & Co. (Price 6d.)

¶ *Englishmen not Israelites*. By JOHN WILKINSON. Second edition. London: Houghton & Co. (Price 6d.)

luggage, when he fled with a princess of Judah, who afterwards became the ancestress of our beloved Queen Victoria."

We are glad to have the opportunity of calling attention to Mr. Ellis's very useful pamphlet, presenting the sequence of events in the Eastern Question from July 1875 to May 1877. Mr. Ellis gives in one margin the date of each "event," and in the other the references to the Blue Book in which it appears.*

In April *The Preacher's Commentary* had reached its twenty-third part,† and was occupied with the latter part of the Book of Amos, the short but striking prophecy of Obadiah, and the Book of Jonah. Mr. Dickinson has also issued a striking collection of the Rev. Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures*.‡ Mr. Cook, as our readers are probably aware, has become famous by his weekly lectures in Boston (U.S.). The lectures are quite original in their manner.

The *Expositor* (one shilling, monthly) is maintaining its character for its sober and scholarly illustration of Holy Scripture; we should be glad to see in it more expository work by Mr. Cox, the editor. Mr. Dickenson's *Homiletical Quarterly* for April, (half a crown, quarterly) in addition to many other articles, contains homiletical sketches on the Book of Joel, homiletical sketches on the Epistle to the Hebrews; homiletical sketches on the Epistle of St. James, and about forty pages of "Sermonic Outlines." The *Study and the Pulpit* (sixpence, monthly) contains homiletical commentaries on the Epistle to the Galatians and on the Book of Nehemiah, and a considerable number of "Sermon Outlines," some of which strike us as rather fanciful.

Of the articles in the half-crown Monthly Reviews, for June, the most interesting are Mr. Matthew Arnold's "George Sand," and Mr. Crosskey's able exposition of a scheme for Disendowment, in the *Fortnightly*; Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's important paper on Turkey, Mr. Mackonochie's vigorous and thorough vindication of Disestablishment and Disendowment, and Mr. Froude's article on Thomas Becket in the *Nineteenth Century*; Mr. Wace's "Ethics of Belief," in reply to Professor Clifford—a paper in which Mr. Wace applies with great ingenuity, and with very considerable effect, the method of his lectures on "Christianity and Morality"—and Mr. Llewellyn Davies's "Erastianism," in the *Contemporary*.

* *The Sequence of Events in the Eastern Question*. July 1875 to May 1877. Nottingham: Dunn & Fry. (Price 1s.)

† *The Preacher's Commentary: The Book of Jonah*. By Rev. J. WOLFENDALE. London: R. D. Dickenson. (Price 1s.)

‡ *Rev. Joseph Cook's Monday Lectures*. London: R. D. Dickenson. (Price 2s. 6d.)

The Congregationalist.

AUGUST, 1877.

JOHN ANGELL JAMES.*

JOHN ANGELL JAMES, the author of "The Anxious Inquirer," was born at Blandford Forum, in Dorsetshire, on June 6th, 1785. He says in his Autobiography that his father, who was a draper, was "quite an ordinary man, somewhat handsome in person, but not of strong intellect." His mother was, perhaps, a descendant of one of the younger sons of Admiral Blake. He describes her as "a woman of sweet, loving, peaceable, and gentle disposition . . . of sincere piety, without much theoretical knowledge. Her heart was beyond her head, as is the case, I believe, with many of God's children. She was a woman of prayer, and so fervent in her private devotions that she could be heard far beyond the precincts of her closet." Both her father and mother were members of the Independent congregation at Blandford. The minister was a man of excellent character and evan-

* Dr. Evans, of Cheshunt, and Dr. Hurdall are about to issue a volume containing biographical sketches of nineteen eminent Congregationalist ministers who have died during the last ten or twenty years. The sketch of Mr. James was prepared for this volume, which will be published within the next two or three months. The volume will include sketches of Dr. Leifchild, by J. Leifchild; of Dr. Bennett, by Dr. Risdon Bennett; of Dr. Hamilton, of Leeds, by Edward Baines; of Dr. Fletcher, by Dr. Reynolds; of Caleb Morris, by Dr. Thomas; of Mr. Lynch, by Mr. Cox; of David Thomas, by Dr. Allen; of Mr. Jay, by Dr. Newth; of Dr. Reed, by Andrew Reed; of Pye Smith, by E. Pye Smith; of Dr. Wardlaw, by R. W. Thompson; of Dr. McAll, by S. W. McAll; of Dr. Raffles, by Dr. Lindsay Alexander; of Mr. Binney, by E. White; of Dr. Halley, by R. Halley; of Dr. Redford, by R. A. Redford; of G. W. Conder, by Edward Miall; of Dr. Vaughan, by J. S. Rogers. There will be an introductory sketch by Dr. Stoughton. There will also be a photograph of the subject of each sketch, and sermons will be given illustrating the characteristic style the preacher.

gelical in his creed ; he was a fair scholar, but a dull preacher. All the religious fire in Blandford in those days seems to have been among the Methodists, and Mrs. James often went on Sunday evening to the Methodist service, and took one of her sons with her.

At thirteen years of age Angell James was apprenticed to a linen-draper at Poole. During the first years of his apprenticeship he began to feel religious restlessness. He says : " I wanted to be pious, but knew not how." There was no one to whom he had the courage to speak about the thoughts which were troubling him. But a new apprentice was engaged, and the first night he came he knelt down by his bedside and prayed. Angell James thought to himself—" Here is an answer to my prayer ; here is somebody to lead me in the way of religion." The new comer, as soon as the shop was shut in the evening, was in the habit of going to a neighbouring cobbler—a devout, kindly man, who seems to have had the power of attracting the hearts of young lads. Angell James soon went to the cobbler's too. " The good man," he says, " used to pray with us, and at length got us to attempt the exercise of prayer with him. In order to take off all fear from my mind, he requested me, the first time I prayed, to go and stand in a small place that was boarded off, in which coals and other matters were kept. Here, in this dark corner, I stood to pour out an audible prayer for the first time with a fellow-creature." A sermon preached by Mr. Sibree, of Frome, the conversation of the cobbler and his wife, the evening meetings in the cobbler's room, to which soon afterwards other lads began to come, resulted in leading Angell James to form a definite decision to live a religious life. He became a Sunday-school teacher, and his friends encouraged him to become a minister.

His father did not regard this desire of his son's with any approval ; but, largely through the influence of Mr. Bennett, of Romsey—afterwards Dr. Bennett, of London—his objections were removed, and in the course of a few months Angell James was set to Gosport, where Dr. Bogue was training twelve or fifteen young men for ministerial and missionary work. The cobbler at Blandford, and the lads who met in his house, did not forget their friend when he left them. They prayed for him, and they sent him a letter, which was found among Mr. James' papers after his death. The letter is curious to look at : every line begins with a capital letter as if it were blank verse ; but it shows the simplicity of heart, the kindliness, and the religious earnestness of the writers. Dr. Bogue did what he could with the young men under his care, and Mr. James filled many old-fashioned manuscript books with notes of the Doctor's lectures ; but he often expressed his deep and bitter regret that he had not received a more thorough education. He

remained at Gosport only two years, and some time before the two years had expired he was invited to the pastorate of Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham. Here he began his ministry in the autumn of 1805, and here he remained till his death in the autumn of 1859.

He was but a lad—under twenty—when he accepted the pastorate, and was only a few months over twenty when he finally left Dr. Bogue and came to Birmingham. Within a few weeks after his ministry began he fell in love with a young lady in his congregation, and married her before the year was out. Fortunately she was a woman of great good sense, and her religious life was deep and earnest. Her influence over him was very powerful and altogether good. But for some time I am afraid that he was rather idle, and this was not unnatural, for he had never been trained to regular and systematic intellectual work. He was a pleasant companion, and was always in request at the houses of his friends. His powers of mimicry, which, however, in his later years he rarely exercised, were extraordinary. The flexibility of his face and of his voice, and his keen sense of fun, made him one of the best of story-tellers that I ever heard. It has been said of him by one who only knew him when he was an old man, that if he had not been a preacher he should have been a comic actor. The suggestion has a touch of irreverence in it, and more than a touch of exaggeration; but the severe restraint which he thought it right to place upon himself gave those who knew him only as a preacher a very false impression of his temperament. He was genial to the last, and in his youth he had overflowing spirits, and was full of frolic and nonsense. He could preach—in a way—without working hard, and I believe that he found it much pleasanter to spend his time with his young wife among his friends than at his desk in his study. He paid the penalty of his desultoriness. For seven years he produced no strong impression in the town. But by the end of that time he was beginning to become a different man. He and Mr. Bennett wrote to each other on questions of criticism and theological doctrine. Mr. Bennett had very considerable scholarship, and his young friend was forced to read carefully in order to maintain the correspondence. This seems to have led him to form better habits. He himself ascribes his early failure to “a want of care on my part in the preparation of my sermons.” When he began to work harder, he began to succeed. The people determined to enlarge the chapel, and while the alterations were in progress, the Unitarian congregation, which then met just behind Carr's Lane, courteously placed their chapel at his disposal for one service every Sunday.*

* This was the “New Meeting” congregation, of which a few years before Dr. Priestley had been the minister; the present minister is my friend, Mr. Crosskey.

This caused Mr. James to be talked about among people who had hardly heard of him before, and when Carr's Lane was reopened early in 1813, it was immediately crowded, "so that the very table-pew was let." In the course of five or six years even the enlarged chapel was too small to hold the congregation, and a new one was built, with sittings for seventeen or eighteen hundred people.

His popularity was now at its height. Whenever he was announced to preach, he attracted immense congregations. His sermon in May, 1815, for the London Missionary Society, was long remembered and spoken of as one of the most remarkable of the "great efforts" which in those times made the annual sermon at Surrey Chapel the chief attraction of the May week. The sermon was very long. After he had been preaching an hour, he sat down in the pulpit, and a hymn was sung; and such was the excitement that, during the singing, oranges were thrown to him from the gallery. When the hymn was finished, he preached for another hour. Like all his "great sermons" preached in his earlier years, it was delivered *memoriter*, and his brother, who sat in the pulpit with the manuscript in his hand, to "prompt" the preacher if for a moment he faltered, has told me that hardly an epithet, a conjunction, or a preposition was forgotten.

This sermon had the merits and the faults of the preaching which was most admired among Congregationalists early in the century, and is one of the most characteristic examples of Mr. James' more ambitious style. Even in his later years he occasionally preached sermons of this sort. They were usually on one or other of the great truths of the Christian faith; but round the central subject were grouped, though in a subordinate position, other important doctrines, so that the sermon derived very much of its strength from the large amount of positive doctrinal teaching which it contained. Of speculation there was very little. Nor was it the preacher's object to get together a great number of striking thoughts about the truth. He tried to state what he conceived to be the truth itself, and to state it in large masses. The structure of the sermon was usually elaborate. There was an introduction, which was really intended to *introduce* the principal topics of the sermon, and was not a mere lumber-room into which the preacher packed away the thoughts for which he could find no room elsewhere. Then followed divisions and sub-divisions, with "transitions," which Mr. James knew how to contrive with great skill. The whole arrangement was determined with a view to rhetorical effect, and to the "application" and peroration the preacher gave most careful labour.

In the substance of Mr. James' sermons there was very little of what could be described as originality. It was not his way—it was not the habit of the preachers of his time—to try for what we now call

"freshness" of thought. He had imagination enough for rhetorical purposes, and his imagination gave glow and colour to the whole substance of his sermons. He had a warmth of temperament which prevented the calmest part of his discourses from being cold. From time to time he gave rein to passion, and to passion of a kind to stir the hearts of the common people. His style, when he made careful preparation, was the style to which the speakers and writers of the latter part of the last century, and the early part of this, were formed by the example of Dr. Johnson. On important occasions he seemed to think it necessary to array his thought in stately robes, the splendours of which look faded and a little tawdry in these days, but which were once greatly admired.

For my own part, I think that he was at his best when he did not feel himself under any obligation to make a great effort. His mind was naturally masculine; there was such vigour in his conception of truth, such shrewdness in his judgments of men; there was such pathetic tenderness in him, such simplicity, such fervour, that his ordinary sermons, preached when he was at ease, were sometimes far better than the sermons by which he won his reputation. He was very successful in his treatment of ethical subjects, and on these subjects he preached constantly. If any of the Evangelical preachers of his time deserved to be reproached for neglecting the inculcation of plain moral duties, and attaching an exaggerated and pernicious importance to the excitement of religious sentiment, no such reproach could be brought against Mr. James. His historical sermons were also extremely good, especially if the interest of the subject happened to be of a homely and pathetic kind. If there was any temptation to rhetorical grandeur, he was not quite safe. On Belshazzar's Feast and the handwriting on the wall he would preach a sermon which might produce great admiration, but which would probably be much inferior in real value to sermons of a quieter kind.

He was most eloquent on the simplest occasions. His addresses at Church meetings to "candidates" when received into Church membership, and his addresses at the Lord's Supper, were among the most beautiful and effective things he ever did. In these the thought was often lofty, the feeling intense, and the style perfectly natural and easy. As a platform speaker, when he had a subject he liked and a great audience, he was very powerful; in fact, he was a born orator, and his oratorical instinct never deserted him. He knew how to convince and to impress and to excite men. His voice, which he used with perfect skill, was clear, strong, and melodious, and capable of expressing all varieties of emotion.

His sudden popularity did not spoil him. It was balanced by severe

suffering. At the very time when he was beginning to attract admiration, he had a dangerous and protracted illness; almost as soon as he recovered he became a widower. For many years after—from about 1835 to 1846—he had to struggle against a nervous depression, which at times made all public engagements away from home a terror to him. Before this came upon him, he was fortunately married a second time; and while she lived, his second wife—whom he describes as a woman of “masculine understanding, great public spirit, equal liberality, and eminently prudent”—was a source of great strength to him. She died in 1841. In 1840 he was so strongly convinced that he himself was likely to die soon, that he wrote farewell letters to the deacons and to the members of the Church at Carr’s Lane. These were found among his private papers after his death.

It was just before this period of depression that he wrote the book by which he is most widely known. “*The Anxious Inquirer after Salvation Directed and Encouraged*” was published in 1834. Its chapters are a series of addresses, which he delivered to a class consisting of persons belonging to his congregation, who were earnestly desiring to begin to live a religious life. That the book was prepared for living people, known to the writer, suggests a partial explanation of its extraordinary success. He knew the kind of instruction which they wanted, the kind of mistakes which they were likely to commit, the kind of perils to which they were exposed. What suited the fifty or sixty men and women for whom the book was written, was likely to suit hundreds of thousands of people. Its success was extraordinarily rapid. It was published, as I have said, in 1834. A sixth edition appeared in 1835. In 1839 the Tract Society, to which he had sold the copyright, had issued 200,000 copies. Before Mr. James’ death it had issued half a million. How many have been sold since I do not know. It has been translated into Gaelic, Welsh, French, Swedish, Malagasy, Dutch, Singalese, and, I believe, into several of the Indian languages. While I knew him he was constantly receiving letters from all sorts of people living in very part of the world, acknowledging, sometimes with most touching earnestness, the help which this little book had given them. With a wise discretion, nearly all these letters were destroyed as they came. Had they been preserved, they would have made several thick manuscript volumes.

Some of his other books had a considerable sale. Among these the best known are “*Christian Charity*,” “*Christian Faith*,” “*Christian Hope*,” “*The Sunday-school Teacher’s Guide*,” “*The Family Monitor*,” “*The Church Member’s Manual*,” “*The Christian Professor*,” “*The Young Man from Home*,” two series of “*Pastoral Addresses*,” “*The Widow Directed to the Widow’s God*,” “*The Earnest Ministry*,” “*The*

Church in Earnest," "The Young Man's Friend and Guide through Life," "The Young Woman's Friend and Guide through Life," and "Christian Progress." Most of these books were first preached to his congregation, and they fairly represent the general character of his preaching. Anyone who cares to know what was the characteristic teaching of the Evangelical school in the first half of the nineteenth century cannot do better than read the "Anxious Inquirer," and one or two of Mr. James' practical works. The great tradition of the Evangelical Revival was still strong. The truths by which Whitfield and Wesley had regenerated the religious life of England a hundred years before, were the main topics of Evangelical preachers. The Death of Christ as an Atonement for sin, Justification by Faith, the necessity of the New Birth—these doctrines were incessantly reiterated. The menaces of eternal punishment, which were a great element of power in the sermons of earlier preachers, had now, however, become less frequent, though they were not disused; and the awfulness of Judgment to come still gave solemnity to all appeals to the impenitent. The *spirit* as well as the doctrine of the Revival was perpetuated by Evangelical preachers. They were eager to convert men. They felt that between the converted and the unconverted there was a difference of infinite significance, and that the unconverted were threatened with an appalling doom. They insisted on the uncertainty of life, and on the perils to which those were exposed who did not instantly repent and believe the Gospel. The "Church" and the "world" were to their minds strongly contrasted, and in the teaching which they gave to those who already believed, they insisted very much on the necessity of avoiding "worldliness" in spirit and in personal habits. Perhaps there was just a touch of asceticism in their theory of the spiritual life.

In Mr. James's books it will be seen that while he thought himself a Calvinistic, his theology showed little trace of the characteristic doctrines of Calvinism. Among the Independents the severity of the earlier Calvinism had been greatly modified by the influence of Dr. Edward Williams, the author of a treatise on "Divine Equity and Sovereignty," and one of the predecessors of Mr. James in the pastorate of the Church at Carr's Lane. Among the Baptists a similar influence had been exerted by the writings of Andrew Fuller. Mr. James' own position was still further modified by the controversy which for a time separated the Presbyterians of the United States into two great parties. He read with great interest the publications both of the theologians of Princeton and of their opponents who maintained a hostile position in the *Quarterly Christian Spectator*. His sympathies and convictions went with the "new school." I remember very well that in long discussions which I had with him soon after I became his colleague, he said that he was not

at all clear that through original sin human nature was *depraved*. He rather inclined to believe that it was *deprived* of certain supernatural aids to holiness which all men would have received if Adam had not sinned. This was a grave departure from Calvinism. In his preaching he very rarely, if ever, asserted the Calvinistic doctrine of the Divine Decrees.

In addition to the works I have already mentioned he published many separate sermons and a considerable number of tracts and pamphlets. Among the pamphlets there are two which deserve special notice. When the news of the great insurrection in China reached England in 1852 and 1853, the friends of Christian missions saw that a critical opportunity had come to them for making known to the Chinese the great truths of the Christian Faith. A friend of Mr. James's—Mr. Thomas Thompson—suggested to him that the wisest course would be to secure the immediate circulation among the people of a million copies of the New Testament. Mr. James adopted the scheme with modifications of his own, and proposed it in a letter published in the *British Banner* and the *Patriot*, addressed to the Protestants of the United Kingdom. The Bible Society took up the suggestion, and, in the course of a few months, the special contributions for this purpose amounted to £32,000, which provided for the printing, not of "one million Testaments," but of two millions. In 1858, when the war between England and China, originated by the affair of the *Arrow*, was brought to a close, and new facilities for missionary work in China were guaranteed by Treaty, Mr. James published a pamphlet, "The Voice of God from China," appealing for a hundred missionaries. The fervour and passionate earnestness with which he pleaded for the evangelisation of the vast empire was very striking and impressive. The other pamphlet to which I have referred was published in 1830. It was provoked by an article which had appeared several years before in the *British Review* on his "Christian Fellowship; or, The Church Member's Guide." In this book, Mr. James had used very strong language in describing the evils which sometimes arise in Independent Churches as the result of the ambition, the self-will, and the meanness of their members. The reviewer quoted passage after passage to illustrate the miserable defects of Independency. Mr. James took no notice of the article when it was first published, but some years later it was printed as a tract, and entitled, "The Church of England and Dissent," and was very largely circulated. He then thought it necessary to reply, and issued his "Dissent and the Church of England." The spirit of the pamphlet was admirable, and its controversial vigour was equally admirable. No severer indictment was ever laid against the English Church. He struck hard, though his blows were fair. The

pamphlet produced a considerable sensation, and of course he was denounced as a "political Dissenter." His views on the relations between the Church and the State were as definite as those of any modern Nonconformist, and he saw no hope of remedying the corruption of the Church of England except by Disestablishment; but he never committed himself to the movement which was originated by Mr. Edward Miall and the Anti-State Church Association, and had no sympathy with it.

Any sketch of Mr. James's character and history would be defective which did not refer to the earnestness with which he endeavoured to promote union among Evangelical Protestants. He was one of the founders of the Evangelical Alliance, and for some years he cherished the hope that that organisation might do very much to unite all Protestant Christendom. He was also one of the founders of the Congregational Union. The "Declaration of the Principles of Faith and Order," submitted by the Union at its first meeting, and subsequently adopted was, I believe, drawn up by Dr. Redford and himself. During his later years he gave a large amount of time and labour to the service of Spring Hill College. For about twenty years he was Chairman of the Board of Education.

It was while I was a student at Spring Hill that I came to know him. It was his habit to finish the preparation of his sermons by twelve or one o'clock on Saturday, and at two o'clock he generally had three or four of the students to dine with him. After dinner we had an hour's free talk, and then we left him. The impression which he produced upon those who knew him only in public was soon corrected in private intercourse with him. Young men generally supposed that he was stern, ascetic, and rather imperious. When they came nearer to him they found that he was genial, generous, frank, and brotherly. He gave himself no "airs." He did not play the great man. There was no ostentatious talk about his popularity and success. He could put down a pretentious and conceited lad with a word, but he was very tolerant of the assumption of youth, if it did not pass beyond endurable limits. His deep and intense earnestness was as evident at the dinner-table as in the pulpit, but it did not prevent him from laughing at a humorous story, or from "capping" it with another. If a lad of eighteen or nineteen controverted any of his opinions, he discussed the question fairly, and without any attempt to settle it by the authority of his age and experience.

When I left college, in 1853, I became his assistant, and in the following year was elected by the Church to the co-pastorate. In his relations to myself, all the noblest elements of his nature were illustrated. Of course I came to know him very intimately, and I can say

that I never saw in him any trace of meanness or selfishness. His simplicity was the simplicity of a child; his frankness was as clear as the sunlight. He was always truthful, generous, and magnanimous. He enjoyed, and enjoyed heartily, the affection of his Church, and of the thousands of good men and women all over the country, who thought of him as being all that a Christian minister ought to be; but when this affection expressed itself in even moderate terms of admiration, his humility made the admiration painful to him.

His religious life, during his later years, was calm and peaceful, but seldom very joyous. The sense of responsibility—responsibility for personal character and ministerial work—never left him. To him the commandments of God were “exceeding broad,” and, perhaps, he hardly saw that the promises are broader still. If he erred, it was on the safe side. He perfected holiness “in the fear of the Lord.” He was a good man as well as a great preacher—good to the very core of his heart. There was nothing in him to excuse or to bear with. Those who knew him best loved him most warmly, and revered him most deeply.

He died October 1st, 1859.

R. W. DALE.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

AUGUST 5.—“*Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*”—Hebrews xii. 11.

AMONG the many silent influences which the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has exercised over the world, not the least has been the new and more spiritual meaning that it has given to many of the common words of man's every-day life. It has not only breathed a new spirit into man, but it has taken the very words of his lips, and has baptized them into a holier and loftier significance, and has added in this way incalculably to the richness and depth of human thought.

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition: these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

The Greek word translated "chastening" in the text is a remarkable illustration and proof of this fact. Originally, as used by the Greeks themselves, it meant "education," and nothing else; the rearing or training of a child for the duties and responsibilities of his life in the world. But the moment the Gospel touched this word it lifted it into a far holier and profounder meaning. It perceived that there was no true and lasting "education" possible for the sinful and foolish heart, whether of children or of men, except that which came through the discipline of sorrow, and it added to the old Greek word an entirely new moral significance, so that it no longer meant simply "education," but education by chastisement; the "learning obedience," as the Apostle says, "through the things which are suffered."

And the change which the Gospel has wrought upon words is only the index and result of a still deeper change that it has wrought on things. Take that one constant fact in human life of which the text speaks, its sorrow and suffering, as an example. If the Gospel had done nothing else for the world than reveal to it the secret love and secret meaning of the "mystery of pain," it would have conferred a greater and more permanent benefit on mankind than all that other systems of philosophy or religion put together have been able to do. For so long as the world lasts, suffering lasts too. In every age, among every nation, there are broken hearts, and cries of pain, and tears of anguish falling to the ground, and everywhere, in its loneliness and sorrow, the heart makes the same bitter cry, "Wherefore?" To this cry no religion, save that of the Bible, has ever yet returned an answer. But the Bible has, and it has done so by uttering one single word—the word of our text, "chastening." Everything the heart yearns to know, when it is sad and broken, is in that word. The assurance that pain and trouble are not the inevitable results of an iron system of law, that crushes men's hearts as the mills grind out corn, but that they are only another name for a Father's tender and wise education of His child, and that the results of the education will more than justify its hardest lessons,—all this was declared to the world when, for the first time, the Bible called suffering by its new name of chastening. If it be a Father's hand that hold the rod, then the rod itself must needs be only another name for the Father's love. This revelation has been one of the great revelations of the Bible to man. It has not pretended to take away sorrow from human life. Sorrow is still as "grievous" as ever, and the cloud still hangs on the earth. But the light of God's love has shone upon the cloud, and its darkest places are now transfigured with the glory of heaven. Nay! the darkness itself has been shown to be but

"The shadow of God's wing as He drew near to bless."

And this will teach us a very practical lesson, both as to how we ought to deal with the troubles of others, and how we ought to bear our own. There are some people who seem to imagine it is very wrong to *feel* trouble as much as they do. They think it would show greater trust in God, and greater love to Him, if they could forget their trouble in the thought of the love that has sent it, or they reproach themselves with even desiring that the trouble might be taken away. Now there is nothing of this unnaturalness in the way in which the Bible deals with sorrow. There is not a word in it, from first to last, that condemns the sob of a broken heart. God is too good, and knows too well what sorrow is, and what we are, to expect smiles when tears are all we can offer. Jesus Christ Himself not only "groaned in spirit" and "wept" over the grave of Lazarus, but in His own great agony prayed so earnestly that the cup might pass from Him, that "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Besides, if trouble was not felt it would not answer its end. The rod is meant to hurt the child, or there would be no object in using it. God never plays at chastening us. However "grievous" we may tell Him the chastening is, His own word has told us that already. We are to be "exercised thereby." But this is what God expects from all His children in times of trouble: He expects them to take His chastening as teaching; to be willing to ask what are the lessons they most need to learn, and then from the open pages of the book set before them—pages, it may be, blotted with tears,—to begin to learn, as little children, all that the Father has given them to learn; to regard sorrow, in one word, not as an end, but as a means to an end. And what an end it is! God Himself has no higher object in calling us into being than the object He contemplates in the discipline of sorrow. It is to "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby;" that is (for we have too much lost the true meaning of this Scripture word "righteousness") to make us right—right in our relations to God; right in our relations to our fellow-men; right in ourselves; wholly and altogether right.

It is to be feared that many Christian people forget the greatness of this end. When sorrow comes they are satisfied to be resigned, and to be willing to bear the cross; but they forget there is something much greater than resignation to be learnt from trouble, and that is "righteousness." Whatever else chastening may do for us, if it fail to make us righteous it has failed in the end for which God has sent it, and He may have to repeat the discipline in other and severer ways until its meaning finally be learnt.

But when sin ceases sorrow will cease. When the last remaining dross has been purged from the gold, the refining fire will be needed no

longer, and will be suffered to die out for ever. Therefore it was that in the vision which St. John had of the "holy city" which came down from God out of heaven, he saw within it "neither sorrow, nor crying, neither any more pain;" for both the "chastening" and the sin which needed it were among "the former things" that had for ever "passed away."

AUGUST 12.—"*Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.*"—Psalm l. 15.

Love that needs to be entreated is not perfect love. So, at least, we judge of all the highest forms of human love. What father, for example, requires his child to come to him and beg him for what the child needs before he will consent to bestow it? We feel that for a father to treat his child thus, would at once show that the father's own heart was wrong and cold. The spontaneity of the gifts of love, the delight it has in anticipating the wants of others, rather than in waiting to be asked, are of the very essence of love. If these are absent, then we say love is absent. And this is especially true when the object of our love is in distress or trouble, and is thrown helpless and dependent upon us. A mother does not need the cry of her sick child to unseal the deep fountains of a mother's love, and to cause them to flow out in all their tender ministries towards it. The little face, pale and worn with disease, is its own best appeal to the mother's heart; and you would pierce that heart with an unutterable pain if you thought that it would give no relief to the child unless it first pleaded for pity.

But what is it our "Golden Text" tells us? That He who is the Eternal and Infinite Lord, the "Everlasting Father," the greatness and wonder of whose love to His children makes even the deepest human love seem poor and cold, that He waits for the cry of His troubled child, ere He will bless; and makes the call for his deliverance the condition of its bestowal? Even so. This is the mystery of prayer; a mystery far profounder than the tangled questions about prayer with which we vex and perplex our hearts, such as how it can be answered in a universe ruled by law, or how it can be reconciled with the unchangeableness of God, and the rest. Why should God impose this restraint on His compassion? Why should He, who holds all blessings in His hand, and who has all love in His heart, refuse to bless His people unless "He be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them"? If we can answer this question, we have solved the final mystery of prayer.

And yet those who know the value of prayer, and

"What a change one short hour spent in God's presence
Will prevail to make,"

will be the first to thank God even for the mystery of prayer. Whether there be other and still higher reasons for the necessity of prayer—reasons which lie deep in the nature of God as well as in the nature of man—they may not know ; but this they do know, *that prayer justifies itself*, and the very condition, that seemed like a limitation of the love of God, becomes one of its richest gifts to the heart.

And this is one of the reasons which go very far to explain sorrow. It leads men to pray. When all things are bright and prosperous without, and we live in unbroken happiness, with sunlight everywhere around us, we are in danger of forgetting God by forgetting our need of prayer. It is not "Jeshurun" alone who, when he "waxed fat," "forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation," for we have all fallen into the same sin again and again. Just as the too great brightness of the sunshine causes the distant mountains to fade away, wrapped in a haze of light, so in our summer day of gladness things unseen and eternal are hidden from us, and this present and passing world absorbs and occupies all our thoughts.

Then God sends us trouble. The clouds gather ; the sun is hidden ; the storm falls upon us, and we walk in darkness and in fear ; and then for the first time, it may be for years, we begin to pray. The voice that through long years of uninterrupted peace and prosperity never blessed God for His mercy, now "in the day of trouble" is heard calling upon Him for deliverance. This is not, it is true, the highest form of prayer ; but it is better to pray from fear than not to pray at all. The burden of a great sorrow has brought us to our knees at last. So trouble, like prayer, begins to explain itself. We make a sudden discovery of ourselves, of our coldness, and worldliness, and unbelief, and a thousand promises of God that the glare of the day had hidden, begin to shine upon us as the stars do when the night is come. And slowly our prayer itself changes. We begin to be more concerned to be delivered from the trouble we have found in our own evil hearts and in our evil wills, than from the sorrow that has shown us all this unsuspected and terrible sin in ourselves, until at length the prayer which began with a passionate cry for deliverance from the trouble ends in a far holier desire, "Thy will be done."

And when that will is done in us, trouble has done its blessed work. God hears our prayer, and the same hand of love that laid the weary burden on us now removes it, and the thick clouds pass away and the sunshine returns, and we walk singing along the way. But it is a "new song" we are singing now. Before our trouble came, our song was of happiness in ourselves ; now it is of happiness in our God. We "glorify Him," and that not only for our deliverance from the burden of sorrow, but for what He is in Himself to us ; for the new life we have found in

Him, and for the new peace that the surrender of our will to His has brought to us; and, burdened with a new sense of God's goodness, we now can say—

“ Amid my list of blessings infinite
Stands this the foremost—that my heart has bled.”

Two other thoughts are suggested by the text. First of all, only a personal God and Father meets man's needs when he is in any deep sorrow or trouble. The pseudo-scientific thought of the present day that robs man of his faith in a living and personal God not only does violence to all the noblest intuitions of his reason, but robs his heart of the solitary refuge to which a human heart can flee in time of trouble. Who can call on a law or a force or on a vast impersonal humanity for deliverance “in the day of trouble”? What we need, then, is a Father, and a Father to whom we may go as freely as our children come to us, and into whose fatherly heart we may unburden all our grief, sure that His sympathy and love will not send us unheard away. So long as man is man, and is “born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward,” so long will this verse and verses like it touch a deeper chord in his heart than either pantheism or materialism can ever reach. Above and beyond all law and force there is a Father in heaven, and a Father who speaks to every sorrowing child throughout the world in words like these: “Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.”

Last of all, let us never forget the individuality of God's love and care for us in our trouble. In this verse God speaks to the world as if there were but one child in it, and that child was ourself; and as if there were but one trouble in it, and that trouble was our own. It has been said that “the most precious thing in the promises of God is that they are addressed not to the many, but to the one; not to the indefinite ‘you,’ but to the personal and individual ‘thee;’” and we may apply this here. The lowliest and humblest of God's children may say, “I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”

AUGUST 19.—“*And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.*”—
Jeremiah i. 19.

Jeremiah had fallen on evil times. His whole life was one prolonged but unavailing struggle to arrest the destruction he saw coming upon the kingdom of Judæa. The glory of Judah had departed from it, and the kingdom had become alternately the vassal of the rival powers of Egypt and Assyria. The nation itself had abandoned God. False prophets were prophesying “Peace, peace, when there was no peace.”

Idolatrous worship to the gods of Syria and of Egypt was offered even in the courts of the temple itself. The priests themselves were hopelessly corrupt, and prostituted their office to their own personal aggrandisement. Party strife and hatred raged everywhere, and whilst the nation was threatened by invasion from without, it was exhausting its energy in a suicidal conflict within. The only man whose reign had given promise of a return to the worship of Jehovah, and of political as well as of religious reformation, had perished in battle, and Jeremiah was left alone to lift up his voice in warning and lamentation over the coming doom of the State. For forty years he stood a solitary man, prophesying "against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes, against the priests, and against the people of the land," witnessing with unutterable sorrow the agony of the dissolution of the State, and yet powerless to avert it. His life, his mission, his words were one continual "woe" unto the land. He was "a man of strife" to the end.

And yet no man seemed naturally so unfit for such a conflict as Jeremiah. Again and again he bewails the life to which God had called him. He tells God he is only "a child," "a lamb brought to the slaughter." He hates the sound of conflict, and deplores his own calling to be "a man of strife." He curses the day on which he was born, and wishes he had been "slain from the womb." Of all the prophets he was the most timid and sensitive and desponding, and most averse, by natural temperament and disposition, from a life of continued warfare and danger. But it is to this life God here calls him. He is to be as "an iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole land;" he is "set to root out and to pull down and to destroy;" he is "to gird up his loins and to arise and speak" all that God "commands him;" and the "seething caldron," overflowing with its furious boiling, is the symbol that is given to him of the burden of his own prophetic words. And what is more, despite all Jeremiah's constitutional shrinking from strife and danger, he fulfils, and nobly fulfils, his mission. He triumphs over his own physical weaknesses, and although the utterance of his prophetic message brought him "into derision daily," and made "everyone mock him," although it led to imprisonment and suffering, and even to peril of death, he never shrinks from his task; the bitter and terrible complaints which, when alone with God, he makes of his lot, disappears the moment God summons him] to bear testimony for Him, and the face that before God had been as "a fountain of tears," before man is as hard and unyielding as a "brazen wall."

All this is very full of teaching for us. First of all, we may learn that there are times when open conflict with evil, or public protest against it, becomes the duty of all who profess to be servants of God.

The "worker" is not necessarily serving God better than the "fighter;" nor does it follow that we are doing the will of God when we refuse to take part in any great struggle of right against wrong that may be going on in a nation on the plea that we are men of peace and do not love war, and that we leave fighting to men who like it. None of us can be more disinclined to be "a man of strife" than Jeremiah was, and yet he had to sacrifice all his natural inclinations and preferences, and at the call of God to engage in a perpetual conflict with the rulers and priests of His people; and in the same way it may be our duty to put on one side all our own fancied fitnesses and preferences, and throw ourselves heartily into the battle at the call of God. Sometimes there is no way to any righteous peace except through conflict; the "sword" must "bring" it, if it come at all, and in these cases to refuse to use the sword is to imperil the very peace that we profess to love.

Then, again, we may learn from the career of Jeremiah that even purely political conflict may become a religious duty. There are many Christian people who deny this altogether. They call politics "worldly," and they think that any man who takes a keen interest in the political life of a nation must necessarily endanger his own spirituality of mind. They forget that Jeremiah was the most political prophet of the Old Testament, and that more than one half of his life was occupied in denouncing the political crimes of the Jews, and in warning them of the political calamities that were coming upon them. They forget that the politics of a nation can never safely be divorced from its moral life, and that it is just as much the duty of every Christian to promote righteous politics in a nation as it is to insist on right morality between man and man. If they had lived in Jeremiah's time they would probably have called him a "political agitator." It would not be the only time in the history of the world that a political agitator was also a prophet of the most high God.

AUGUST 26.—"*So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth Thy glory.*"—Psalm cii. 15.

A great injustice is often done to the Jewish religion. It is spoken of as if it were a selfish and exclusive religion, never passing beyond the limits of the Jewish people, and providing a law and a worship which not only ignored but positively excluded all the myriads of the human race not descended from Israel. Even Jehovah Himself is spoken of as "the God of the Jewish people" in as local and as limited a sense as Jupiter or Zeus was the god of Rome or of Greece. The "Golden Text" above is a sufficient refutation of this utter miscon-

ception of the true spirit and genius of Judaism. Here is the Psalmist—whom we know not—suddenly breaking away from the load of trouble and of care that was oppressing him, and rising to the sublime thought of the unchangeable mercy and goodness of God. And as he dwells on the greatness of this truth, he sees in it a pledge and a prophecy that, in spite of all the desolations and grief which now afflict God's people, a time of blessing and of prosperity is at hand. Because God changes not, therefore His promises to His people cannot be broken. "Thou shalt arise," the Psalmist sings, "and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." The complete forgetfulness of his own affliction; its absorption in the thought of the coming day of Zion, is not the most remarkable thing here; it is the way in which the writer of the Psalm goes on to declare the true purpose and meaning of this restoration of Zion that is most astonishing: "So the heathen shall fear the name of Jehovah, and all the kings of the earth Thy glory." All that is greatest and best in the missionary spirit of the Gospel itself could hardly be expressed in fuller or more emphatic words. And this world-wide extension of the kingdom and mercy of God fills the thought of the Psalmist as he sings. Not his own chosen nation alone, but "the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord;" not his own personal griefs alone, but "the earth" hath "Jehovah beheld, to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death." And finally, when the "name of Jehovah" is declared "in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem," then shall "the people be gathered together, and the kingdoms to serve Jehovah."

Now this Psalm, or this text, is by no means singular in the Jewish Scriptures. Those who have never read them, with this thought in view, would be astonished to find how repeated and copious are the references to the coming of a time when even Judaism itself shall pass away, and be absorbed into the vaster kingdom that the Lord God should set up in the earth. Here are two passages taken from a multitude of others like them: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; and in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign to the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and its rest shall be glorious" (Isaiah xi. 9, 10); and this: "All the earth shall worship Thee, and shall sing unto Thee; they shall sing unto Thy name" (Psalm lvi. 4). It is hardly fair, after this, to speak of the narrowness and exclusiveness of the Jewish religion, that is, if we may judge at all from what its authorised expounders, both Psalmists and Prophets, have told us about it.

But it is also worthy of notice that wherever this extension of the kingdom of God to all the earth is referred to in the Old Testament,

it is spoken of as springing from the new glory and prosperity to be given to Jerusalem itself. It is so in the Psalm from which the "Golden Text" is taken, as we have seen; when "Zion" is favoured, then "the heathen shall fear the name of Jehovah, and all the kings of the earth Thy glory;" and it is so all through; Jerusalem is to be made "a praise in the earth," and "salvation" is to be "of the Jews."

These are the watchwords of Old Testament prophecy, and they have a double lesson for us. First of all, as a matter of fact, Christianity itself was born in Judæa; Christ was, "according to the flesh," an Israelite; Christ's first apostles were all Israelites; and Christ's first Church was set up on Jewish soil, with Jewish disciples as its members. So far, then, these ancient predictions have vindicated themselves, but there is yet another and a still richer fulfilment which they are to have. The Church of Christ, as we said last month, has inherited both the glories and the responsibilities of the Jewish Church; the Jerusalem which is from above has taken the place of the Jerusalem which was below, and therefore all the increase of the kingdom of God, which has been declared to depend on the prosperity of Zion, now depends on the prosperity of the Church. This is the true lesson those who are in Christ's Church need to lay to heart. Whether Israel will ever be restored to its ancient glory in its own land or not, may be a question admitting of different answers. But of this there is no doubt whatsoever, that for us the progress of Christianity among men depends on the spiritual life and energy of the Church of Christ. Where there is a dead Church the missionary spirit will be dead too, and the moment it begins to live its missionary enterprise will return.

Parents and teachers could hardly do their children a greater service than by making them feel, even from their earliest years, that the life and glory of Christianity depend on the missionary work it is doing in the world.

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G. S. BARRETT.

GERMAN PROTESTANTISM.

THE German Empire is of yesterday, and, though a most important factor in the political life of Europe, must be regarded not as an organic unity so much as a great State-system, not yet compacted into one homogeneous whole. Little has hitherto been done to consolidate the various Protestant Churches of the Empire. They still exist in all their separateness. Each province, each principality, has its own ecclesiastical institutions. The labours of the Inner Mission, to which we referred in a previous article, are all carried on in the same spirit, but

not under one common direction. There are, we believe, as many as thirty separate and independent Bible Societies.

But there is one association which has called forth the sympathy and co-operation of almost all sections of Protestantism. We refer to the Gustavus Adolphus Society, in which members of the Reformed, Lutheran, and United Churches labour together for the purpose of succouring such of their co-religionists in and out of Germany as are "destitute of the means of Church life, and are therefore in danger of being lost to the Church." The Society originated in 1832, and was intended as a memorial in honour of the Swedish King, "the Lion of the North," and the champion of the Protestant cause, who died on the 6th of November, 1632, on the field of battle at Lützen, in Saxony, after defeating the Imperialists under Wallenstein. For ten or fifteen years the progress of the society was very slow, but having at length been incorporated with one or two similar societies at Dresden and elsewhere, it began to call out the liberality of the whole people, until last year its income amounted to the respectable figure of £34,700. Since its origin it has received £601,800, and has given help to 2,448 parishes. The first idea of such a society suggested itself to Dr. Grossmann, of Leipzig, on hearing of the distress of a small Protestant parish in Bohemia, which for years had shared with the neighbouring Saxon village of Brumbach the services of the same pastor and teachers, but which at length by order of the Austrian Government was compelled to build a chapel, a parsonage, and a school, and to maintain a minister of its own. This incident drew attention to the sad condition of other Protestant congregations in Bohemia, and Austria generally; and it is to the *Diaspora* (as the Germans call the Protestants scattered in Roman Catholic countries) in this part of Europe, with their frightfully straightened circumstances, that a very large proportion of the money collected by the Gustavus Adolphus Society is apportioned. Thus, out of the whole sum raised, £176,800 has gone to Austria. The plan of operation is to form Associations (1,593 were in existence in 1876) in various places, to connect these together under a Head Association, and to direct the affairs of the whole Society by means of a Central Committee. The income of each of the branch Associations is divided into three equal parts. One-third is left to the disposal of the Association. The other two-thirds are sent to the Central Committee, but the Association sending them signifies to what community outside of Germany it wishes one of the two-thirds to be devoted, and whether the remaining third is to be added to the capital of the Society or disbursed in such way as the Committee may determine. It will thus be seen that the organisation, covering as it does the whole country, but having its head-quarters at Leipzig, and holding a

general meeting at least once every three years, may and doubtless does exercise an important influence on German Protestantism generally, and if pervaded by a more evangelical spirit, might render great service to all the Churches of the Fatherland. As it is, there is some fear of its becoming too entirely a means of promoting German nationality. This, at least, is the light in which it is viewed by the various nationalities in Austria, who in some cases have on this ground refused to receive help from its funds. One thing, however, is certain, the Society has done good service in Germany as a church and school building society, and as a means of evoking the spirit of liberality.

The triennial gatherings are seasons of much rejoicing. Representatives come from most of the Associations, and pastors from many of the struggling communities in and out of Germany that are asking for help. Amid ringing of bells the company—1,500 at Stuttgart in 1874—gather to listen to the opening sermon. Then follow the reports, the welcome to the strangers, and their speeches. The trials and sufferings of many an isolated Protestant congregation are related with much pathos, while men from Italy, Spain, and South America tell their story of labour, disappointment, and success. But one of the most interesting features of the gathering is the Report of the Committee deciding to which of three of the most distressing cases the principal grant (*liebes-gabe*) shall be made. The three selected in 1874 were Gurzno, a little town in West Prussia, with a Protestant community of 500 Protestants, living amongst five or six times that number of Roman Catholics: for years they had been preparing to build a church, had collected 3,000 to 4,000 thalers, had got the building materials together, but could go no further; Kirkelneuhäusel, in the Bavarian Palatinate, with 1,800 Protestants and a church far too small and falling into ruins; and Myslowitz, in Upper Silesia, where the Protestants had increased from fifteen in 1820 to more than 1,000 in 1855. It was determined that the sum of 5,600 thalers (£840) should be given to Gurzno, while the other two communities received £405 each.

A work entitled "German Home Life," which first appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, and has since been published separately, gives a lamentable picture of the almost entire absence of religious feeling in the upper circles of the Fatherland, and represents the clergy as treated with absolute contempt. And we doubt not that this much-read book has produced a very wide-spread impression that religion is wholly dead in the land of Luther. It cannot be denied that, taking the country as a whole, religion is at a low ebb, and that if "liberalism" continues to spread, even the forms of worship will in time be wholly neglected by the great mass of the people. Still, the Church in Germany is not a lifeless institution. The existence of the Inner Mission and its manifold

labours are an indication of this, while the various foreign missionary societies show that the grand traditions of the past are not entirely forgotten, and that Jesus Christ still has many a company of faithful and obedient disciples who count it their joy to spread abroad the savour of His name.

In our former article we said that "one-fourth of all the missionary agents in heathen lands are sustained by German and Swiss societies." It may not be amiss if we indicate a little more fully the extent to which the missionary spirit has taken possession of the Church in Germany. We gather our details from an able pamphlet by Professor Christlieb, of Bonn, on the "Relation of Evangelical Germany to the Missionary Calling." In 1800, Pastor Jänicke opened a small missionary training school in Berlin, from which there went forth to the service of various English and other societies (the German missionary societies established at the beginning of the eighteenth century had by this time ceased to exist, through the influence of Rationalism) such men as Nyländer, Pacalt, Rhenius, Gützlaff, and many others. In 1815, the Evangelical Missionary Society of Bâle was formed, largely under the auspices and by the liberality of South German Christians, for the purpose at first of training missionaries for the English and Dutch societies. About 1830, Germany began to establish missions of its own in heathen lands. The Bâle Missionary Society, which has now thirty-three head stations in Africa, India, and Persia, and 108 missionaries, led the way, and was followed by the Berlin Missionary Society, which may be designated as the High Lutheran Society, the Rhenish Missionary Society, Gossner's Missionary Association, the North German Missionary Society, and the Evangelical Lutheran Society. The Pilgrim Mission at St. Chrischona, near Bâle, was intended to be a means of preparing and sending to Palestine, Egypt, and Abyssinia, bands of Christian handicraftsmen accompanied with teachers and missionaries of a humble character. Several stations were formed, but the chain of twelve to be named after the Apostles, and stretching from Jerusalem into the very heart of Abyssinia, was never completed, and the project had to be abandoned. The Institution is now devoted to the preparation of evangelists for Christian lands. In 1853, Pastor Harms, of Hermannsburg founded a mission on a principle similar to that of the Chrischona Mission, the connection of evangelisation with colonisation. Nor must we omit the old Moravian Missionary Society, which now maintains ninety-two stations and 160 missionaries.

The band of nearly five hundred missionaries, maintained by these societies in heathen lands at an annual cost of £112,850, gives evidence of a considerable amount of missionary spirit; but an examination of the sources whence the money comes will show that the zeal for the

extension of Christ's Kingdom is far greater in some than in other parts of the empire. And here we cannot do better than quote Professor Christlieb's own words (freely translated) :—

" If we subtract the 268 missionaries of the Moravian and Bâle Societies, will not the proportion of missionaries supported by Middle and North Germany be such as to put us to shame? If we take away the South German Bavarians who enter the Leipzig, Wirtemberg, Swiss, and Bremen Missions, and on the other hand add the few Prussians who join the Bâle Mission, the number of missionaries representing all the Churches of Middle and North Germany will not amount to more than 200, while little Wirtemberg alone has, 50, although it has not half so many Protestants as the single province of Brandenburg, and not nearly so many as the province of Prussia, or Saxony, or Silesia. The whole of Middle and North Germany (Herrnhut—the Moravian colony always excluded) scarcely contributes to all its Missionary Societies as many thalers (a thaler is equal to $3\frac{3}{4}$ francs) as little Wirtemberg does francs to the Bâle Mission alone. It may therefore be said that the two centres of missionary spirit in Germany still continue, as in the past, to be Wirtemberg and the Moravian Church : nowhere else has missionary work been so thoroughly taken up by the Church and the people. The districts that come nearest to these in Evangelical zeal are the Rhenish provinces, Westphalia, and the Hanoverian Lüneburg. Take away these three territories, and the whole remaining North Germany, and especially the Eastern part, shows a remarkably small amount of interest in Missions."

From these words of one of Germany's ablest and most devoted professors, it will be seen that the Protestant religious life of the empire is most unequally distributed. Whole regions present an arid and sterile aspect, while in a few districts Divine truth is appreciated and Christian zeal characterises many of the people. Let us glance at one or two of these oases in the desert of German Protestantism.* To begin with Wirtemberg.

Wirtemberg is one of the smaller provinces or kingdoms of Germany ; but in its lovely valleys and on its vine-clad hills there is a larger amount of deep religious life than in any other part of the empire. In round numbers its population may be stated at two millions, of whom rather less than two-thirds are Protestants. The Church to which nearly all the Protestants belong is, like the other Churches of Germany, subject to the State. It is nominally governed by a Consistory ; but the real rulers are the King and Minister of Worship. The storms and contentions prevailing in other parts of the Fatherland are almost unknown here. The preachers are mostly Evangelical, and the services and ordinances of the Church are well attended, except in Stuttgart and

* " At the present moment a person may travel through vast regions of Germany without meeting the least sign of religious life." (Dr. Taube, of Berlin, at the Paris Conference of the Evangelical Alliance in 1855.)

some of the larger towns, where the growth of social democracy is rapidly alienating the working-classes from all Christian observances. The Sunday-school is being introduced, and recent statements show that there are eighty of these institutions, with nearly six thousand scholars. But the need of such methods of laying hold of the young is not felt so widely in Wirtemberg as elsewhere, because in almost every parish Sunday and week services for children are held, and besides this—the Falk laws do not affect Wirtemberg—the pastors are inspectors of the day-schools, and give religious instruction there for two hours every week. The chief seat of learning is the University of Tübingen, notorious as the centre of a school of thought with which the name of Baur will ever be connected, but the origin of which should rather, we think, be sought in the peculiar characteristics of the Wirtemberg, or, more strictly speaking, the Swabian mind, in which the imaginative may be said to be the dominant faculty. The laws and principles of things are earnestly sought out, and details are passed over. “While in North Germany Lachmann and Tischendorf were with marvellous diligence subjecting the text of the New Testament to a most minute criticism, the so-called ‘higher’ criticism sprang up in Swabia, and constructed an entirely new canon out of principles which it pretended to have discovered.” The present professors are men of very varied talent and opinions; but not one of them can compare in power and originality with Dr. Beck, their acknowledged head. His works are numerous, but in point of style most unreadable; yet “no professor in Germany has more disciples than he, and certainly none more enthusiastic.”¹ Belonging to the Conciliation school, as it has been called, “he places his Biblical faith in opposition to the orthodoxy of the Confessions on the one hand, and to the cloudy theology of Schleiermacher on the other. The Revealed Word in its organic unity is with him the foundation of all theological speculation. But he holds a far more distinguished place as a moralist than as a dogmatic theologian.”

Wirtemberg Protestantism derives its chief power from the custom prevalent for two centuries among the more godly portion of the community of holding meetings, or “hours” as they are termed, for mutual edification. In almost every town and village such gatherings are common, and it is said that the number of persons attending them amounts to seventy thousand. These “hours” are held in private houses, under the presidency of a layman, and the time is devoted to the study of God’s Word and to mutual edification. Such companies constitute, as has often been said, “a Church within the Church” (*Ecclesiola in Ecclesia*). Prophetic and other mysterious questions possibly form too frequently the subject of meditation and inquiry. Occasionally men of singular character and extraordinary notions rise up, and, as we shall see,

gather around them a number of disciples ; but these parties—it would hardly be fair to call them sects—seldom separate from the National Church, while the testimony of many eminent men, as well as the practical results of these pietistic circles, lead to the conclusion that the Christian life has thus been prevented from falling into the barren condition which it manifests so largely throughout the Fatherland. Provost Köllner said of these gatherings : “ I must acknowledge that some of the happiest and most blessed hours of my life have been those spent in such fellowship. There I have breathed a heavenly, life-giving air ; there I have experienced mighty impulses towards complete surrender of heart ; there I have met with correction, awakening, exhortation, devotion of such a kind as I never received elsewhere. Yes, I have in such communion obtained the deepest insight into the truth of Holy Scripture ; and in the years of greatest temptation my leaning towards the fellowship prevented me from many follies and sins.” And many similar testimonies might be cited, but this must suffice. By these “ hours ” many a tender plant is strengthened, many a good tree obtains fresh power to produce the blessed fruits of righteousness. Nor are the nurture of the spiritual life and the enjoyment of the pleasures of Christian communion the only ends sought. The extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom occupies very largely the thoughts and sympathies of the Wirtemberg pietists. From these Christian circles come most of the large contributions towards foreign missions already referred to ; from amongst them, also, numbers of recruits are obtained for the prosecution of the Holy War in various parts of the world. There are families in which from five to six children have devoted themselves to the missionary enterprise, and it has been said that in thirty years, from 1824 to 1854, two hundred missionaries went forth to the foreign field from the little kingdom of Wirtemberg. Missionary literature is very abundant, and is much read ; Missionary meetings awaken general sympathy. Thus it is evident that there is a reality and intensity about the religious life of a certain portion of the old Swabian race.

Methodists and Baptists have for some time been at work here and there in the kingdom, but with small success. The former are said to be very active, and since Pearsall Smith visited the country they have somewhat multiplied, but they bear the reputation of being sheepstealers. Of the distinct communities that have sprung up among the pietists, but without separating themselves from the National Church, the principal are the Michelianites and Pregizerianites. The former are the disciples of Michael Hahn, who died in 1819, and who had largely imbibed the doctrines of Behmen and Oetinger, the mystics. His followers dwell largely on the ascetic aspect of the Christian life, and though not laying down celibacy as a law, yet strongly

recommend it. They are supposed to number from 8,000 to 10,000. The followers of Pregizer, a former vicar of the National Church, are not so numerous. They lay chief stress on justification, as the Michelianities do on sanctification. They maintain that forgiveness of sins is bestowed at the moment of baptism, and that this truth should constantly be kept in view. Their life and worship partake largely of a joyous character. Then there is the new and interesting community of Christian Socialists, whose founder was Gustavus Werner, also a clergyman, who devoted himself largely to the establishment of asylums for orphans and others; also, Friends of Jerusalem or Confession of the Temple, who, adopting similar Socialistic views, seek their realisation in the formation of colonies in Palestine. They are a well-organised community, with a bishop at their head. Unlike the other denominations already mentioned, they have separated themselves from the National Church. Other minor societies have been formed, but their membership is too insignificant to call for notice here. One other movement, however, must not be passed over in our brief notice of religious life in Wirtemberg—the colony of Kornthal, near Stuttgart. It was founded in 1819, by Pastor Hoffman,* as a refuge for pious people who were distressed by the introduction of rationalistic liturgies into the Church services. Only those are admitted as members whose life and opinions harmonise. The colony chooses, dismisses, and pays its own pastors and preachers, and is allowed to direct its own secular affairs, subject of course to the control of the State. It has capital schools, so that its members (1,200) are a well-instructed people. A similar colony enjoying similar privileges was formed at Wilhelmsdorf in 1822. Want of space forbids more than a mention of the prayer-hospitals at Boll and elsewhere, in which no medicine is used, and of other philanthropic and Christian institutions. What we have said is sufficient to substantiate our statement that a large amount of earnest religious life beats in the hearts of the people of Wirtemberg. But it is necessary to add that many and terrible evils abound. Multitudes never attend a place of worship. Indeed, most insufficient provision is made even here for the religious instruction of the people. Prelate Kapff said in 1855, "Our cities and villages have the same churches as when the population was three or four times less." Then the drinking habits of the people are another hindrance to religion. The Wirtembergians, like their neighbours, the Bavarians, are convivial and bibulous. "In all the cities of Southern Germany most of the Government officials, merchants, and well-to-do members of all professions, spend nearly every evening over

* A brief and interesting account of this colony is given in a little book, entitled "Faith's Miracles, or the Power of Prayer," as experienced by Pastor Hoffmann's wife.

wine and beer, enveloped in thick clouds of tobacco smoke." In most places there is a publichouse for every 140 inhabitants; and in 1852, in Wirtemberg alone, with its 1,800,000 inhabitants, spiritous liquors were consumed to the value of 2,000,000 francs (£80,000). But if there are abounding evils in the little Wirtemberg kingdom, and if from this part of Germany have gone forth some of the formidable opponents of Christianity, such as Paulus, Hegel, and Strauss, yet, on the other hand, it remains true that the Christians of Wirtemberg form a noble and earnest band, and a source of unspeakable blessing, that makes itself felt beyond the bounds of the kingdom.

The neighbouring district of Baden forms in many respects a contrast to Wirtemberg. Rationalism there finds a congenial home. Heidelberg, one of its chief towns, is the headquarters of the Protestant Unions (*Protestanten-verein*), which, under the leadership of Professor Schenkel, the Rector of the University, have been seeking "not to revive theology, but to revive Christianity and to renovate the Protestant Church in the spirit of Evangelical freedom, in harmony with the intellectual development of the age." Such is Professor Schenkel's own statement of the object of these Unions, from which it is clear, reading between the lines, that this object is to be attained by clearing away what are considered the cumbrous and old-fashioned scaffoldings by which many are trying to build up the temple of the Lord. "A free and enlightened Protestant Church," not troubling itself about dogmas, such is the ideal pursued by these modern reformers. The Unions have extended themselves beyond the limits of Baden. The whole Protestant world of Germany has resounded with their "liberal" declarations, and in some directions their activity has resulted in the thrusting of rationalistic pastors upon unwilling parishes. The non-church-going Protestants having equally with the others the right of voting at the election of ministers, they are persuaded by the agents of these Unions to go to the poll and tender their votes on behalf of free thought, and thus Evangelical minorities often find themselves saddled with men to whose opinions they have the utmost repugnance. This is how Christianity is being *revived*.

By the avowedly infidel and atheistic portion of the community, these doings are treated with scorn and ridicule. Ed. Von Hartmann, the Coryphæus of the great anti-christian host in Germany, in a pamphlet on "The Decomposition of Christianity and the Religion of the Future," taxes "liberal" Protestants with being *unchristian*, because they believe in Christ as simply the Founder of the Christian religion—a belief common to Jews, Mohammedans, and all who ever heard of Christ, but giving its possessors no right to assume the title of Christian; and as *irreligious*, because their views, if, accepted, will leave so

little of what is commonly called religion as not to deserve the name. And truly the working of their system would seem to justify this two-fold reproach. The University of Heidelberg has now more professors than students in its Theological Faculty. In 1876, only six candidates for the ministry came forth from the Faculty in place of twenty, the number annually required. It may be alleged that this diminution in the supply of pastors is accounted for by the insufficient provision made for their support, and by the distracted and confused state of affairs in the National Church, but, as one of our esteemed correspondents in the Duchy of Baden says, it should rather be accounted for by "the general godless and unchristian spirit of the age," which spirit, as we cannot but think, has been largely fostered by the Protestant Unions. Again, in the towns attendance at Divine worship is such as to show that these Unions have not tended to increase a love for the house of God. In Carlsruhe 14 per cent., in Heidelberg 11 per cent., and in Mannheim only 6 per cent., of the Protestant population go to church. When Schenkel, in 1863, published his "Life of Jesus," 119 of the Baden clergy entered a protest against his views, and since then the Church has been divided into two hostile camps; but in the General Synod, held last October, there was some cessation of hostilities on account of the alarming progress which social democracy, with its materialistic notions, is making in that and almost every other part of Germany. But such *rapprochements* are not always an indication that the truth of God is likely to be defended with greater earnestness. The attempts at reconciliation of divergent or opposite views, made under the influence of fear, are but too often means of retarding, rather than of advancing, the cause of truth. Our hope for Baden lies rather in the fact that there, as in Wirtemberg, "hours" are held in every part of the province, and are a most effectual means of checking the progress of unbelief and ungodliness.

Another district of marked religious interest is the Rhine Province. Its physical features are very striking. In the northern portion the country is level, but elsewhere hills and valleys, with the noble rivers the Rhine and the Moselle, constitute a region of great beauty and grandeur. Vineyards and cherry orchards impart their peculiar aspect to some regions, while in others mines, ironworks, and factories give evidence of the advancing commercial prosperity of the country. Almost every kind of industry is represented. But in no respect is the variety greater than in regard to the distribution of the Catholics and Protestants. This is partly owing to the fact that the province includes eighty different territories, which in former times had their several rulers and religions. In the old electorates of Cologne and Trèves, Protestantism was a proscribed religion, and it is only since the beginning of this century that

smaller or larger colonies of Protestants have settled down here. In some districts the rulers introduced the Reformation, and these are now almost exclusively Protestant in character. In others, owing to peculiar political circumstances Protestants and Catholics live side by side in about equal numbers. But changes have for the last few years been going forward, and in towns once almost exclusively Catholic, such as Düsseldorf, Cologne, Bonn, Coblenz, and Trèves, there are now large Protestant communities. Taking the whole province, the Protestants form a quarter of the population, and thus, next to Posen, it is the least Protestant portion of the empire.

But if numerically Protestantism is weak in the Rhine Province, in point of activity and spiritual power it stands second only to Württemberg. The Wupperthal, with its principal towns, Elberfeld and Barmen, is the chief centre of religious life. Here are the headquarters of many missionary and philanthropic societies, and here once a year the *Festwoche* (festival week) is held, which gathers together for conference, prayer, and social intercourse large numbers of truly earnest Christians from the north and centre of Germany. The synodal district of Elberfeld, embracing Barmen and several smaller towns, numbers, according to the last statistics, 168,000 adherents, of whom 129,000 live in Elberfeld and Barmen. The district is divided into twenty-one parishes, under the care of forty-five pastors and six assistant ministers. Some of the parishes, being small, are amply provided with the means of religious instruction, but in others where, through the rapid development of manufacturing industries, the population is increasing most rapidly, church accommodation and pastoral service are very deficient. There is an Independent Church in Barmen, and in Elberfeld a Netherlands Reformed Church, an old Lutheran Church, a Baptist Church, an Irvingite Church, and one or more companies of Plymouth brethren, but the membership and power of these communities is small. The Wupperthal, however, compares favourably with other parts of Germany where there is a similar increase of population. The true members of the Church are awake to the dangers attending on this rapid growth of population without adequate provision for spiritual instruction. Several new churches have been built during the last ten years, while in the various departments of the Inner Mission great activity prevails. Christian inns, young men's Christian associations, and numerous other instrumentalities are at work. Nor must we omit to mention the Mission-house at Barmen, of which the excellent Dr. Fabri has long been the director. It is the training seminary connected with the Rhenish Missionary Society, and generally contains about thirty young men, who, in addition to a very thorough course of study employ themselves in visiting the poor and holding small meetings

in the surrounding districts. The house stands on a hill overlooking the valley of the Wupper, and near it is a home for the missionaries' children, who, in order to prevent the growth of a clannish spirit, are sent for their lessons to the neighbouring public schools.

In Mühlheim on the Ruhr, an industrial town, there are two Evangelical or Protestant parishes, numbering together 32,000 persons. In 1860, Pastor Stursberg established here an Evangelical Home (*Vereinshaus*), which may be taken as a specimen of many similar institutions throughout the empire. Its original purpose was to serve as a home for workmen coming to, or staying in, Mühlheim, and as a meeting-place for religious and scientific societies. In the centre of the building is a hall, which, with the rooms opening into it, will hold 1,500 people, and here Bible readings and prayer-meetings are held twice a week. In a side building is an evangelical book shop, and a Christian library for girls who have been confirmed. The Christian inn (*Herberge zur Heimath*), which occupies a large part of the building, also has a library, and so has the Young Men's Christian Association, which occupies the left wing, and numbers from sixty to seventy members. In the right wing is an infant school with about 130 children. In other parts of the house, and in various districts of the town, Sunday-schools are held, with more than 1,000 children under the care of twenty-three teachers. In this home are also held *Rauen*, or meetings of persons who have been engaged in funerals. A cup of coffee is served to each, a hymn is sung, and prayer offered, with a view to prevent the visitation of the publichouse. Then the Evangelical Society, which employs a deacon to labour among the irreligious portion of the Protestant community, stands in close connection with this institution, inasmuch as its director, Pastor Stursberg, its manager (*hausvater*), and the pupils—three or four—of the Evangelistic Training School, who live in the house, all co-operate in the town mission. These details will show the direction in which much of German religious activity runs. The gathering together under one roof of a number of Christian agencies constitutes an economy of money, if not also of power, which is deserving of attention amongst ourselves. Again, the social life which these institutions tend to foster is not an unimportant feature. They are Christian homes where the working man finds a hearty welcome and a safe retreat from the seductions and miseries of ordinary inns and lodging-houses.

Close to Mühlheim is Essen, a town of 70,000 inhabitants, of whom 12,000 are employed in Krupp's great gun factories. In the course of the last twenty years the population has increased tenfold, but there has been no corresponding increase of provision for spiritual instruction. Four pastors are charged with the care of the 25,000 Protestants.

There are also four Sunday-schools, with 630 children. A couple of deaconesses attend to the poor and the sick, and three or four col-porteurs and evangelists circulate Christian literature and hold five or six Bible readings (*Bibel-stunden*) every week. To these agencies we must add the efforts made by the Baptists, Old Lutherans, and the Plymouth Brethren. But the insufficiency of this provision for the spiritual wants, even of the Protestant portion of the community, must be apparent to everyone. In 1873, there were 182 public-houses, besides other places where spirituous liquors are sold. Thus drunkenness and other vices are spreading day by day, and the Church of Christ looks on, not idly, but with most insufficient means for grappling with the needs of a population that increases with such alarming rapidity.

Want of space forbids our attempting to delineate the prominent features or general condition of other provinces of the empire, and, indeed, it would be an unwelcome task to depict the spiritually barren aspect of many regions. Thus in Mecklenburg ecclesiasticism is seen in all its rigour and with all its baneful results; no lay preachers or workers are accepted there. Secession from the Church is a grievous sin, as the Baptists discovered to their cost some years ago; and yet there are churches in which no services can be held, because nobody is willing to attend them. In Saxony, once the model Protestant country, Rationalism has got the upper hand, although during the last forty years there has been some considerable return to Evangelical doctrine. In Hanover, Lutheranism in its purest form is the prevailing religion, and very poor are its spiritual results. One of its towns, Hermannsburg, has become, through the burning zeal of Pastor Harms, a centre of great religious activity. A missionary society was formed, and is still maintained, but the sympathy on behalf of the movement would have been far less—on the part, at least, of English Christians—if they had known the excessively high Lutheran spirit which animated its founder, who complained of English and Americans sending out missions to the heathen, because Lutherans are the only people possessed of the true doctrine, and able, therefore, to convert the world.

Into the complicated question of Church Government we shall not enter, and for the reason that it would scarcely be possible, and certainly not edifying, to portray the distinctive features of the various Churches throughout the empire. A year or two ago, the able German correspondent of *At Home and Abroad* said: "The twenty-six millions of Protestants are, ecclesiastically considered, split up into twenty-six State Churches, which have no organic or even fraternal connection with each other. Indeed, strictly speaking, there are several State Churches in Prussia itself, the Churches of the annexed provinces having, for example, nothing to do with the Church of the eight older provinces.

Up to a very recent date, the great majority, indeed nearly all these Churches, had no government of their own. The sovereign was their supreme bishop, and he exercised his functions through a State minister, who was never an ecclesiastic."

The United Evangelical Church—a union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, established in 1831—is the Church of the majority. For this Church a new constitution has lately been framed, which, though very properly giving the laity a larger share in the direction of Church affairs, does not seem likely to promote Evangelical religion. Its working has just been illustrated in Berlin, where, in a parish hitherto supplied with Evangelical preachers, a rationalistic leader has been elected to the post of Pastor *primarius*. The event led to the greatest excitement throughout the parish. In the course of the probationary sermon, delivered just previous to the election, the preacher, Lic. Hossbach went out of his way to deny the Divinity of Christ, and to reject the biblical in favour of the modern method of viewing the world (*Weltanschauung*), and thereupon a large number of his hearers rose and left the church. Two weeks later, at a meeting of one of the town synods, a vote of censure was proposed condemning these disturbers of public worship, as they were called, and after a long discussion was eventually carried. In the afternoon of the same day, another battle was fought in reference to the proposal made by one of the parishes to omit the Apostles' Creed from the Liturgy. The reason given by many of the speakers for wishing this radical alteration in the old form of worship was, that the facts stated in the Creed are no longer regarded as facts, while others insisted that by the omission of this Creed many of the more intelligent people who now keep wholly aloof would be induced to attend church and take part in its affairs! An esteemed correspondent referring to this debate says: "This is probably the *de facto* outbreak of a religious war, which may, before it ends, have serious consequence for German Protestantism."

This brief and cursory view of German Protestantism is not calculated to awaken much hope for the future. The year 1848, which brought such trouble to the sovereigns and princes of Europe, witnessed the beginning of a new era in the religious life of many parts of Germany. Large numbers of the clergy, and many of the *religious* members of the Protestant Church, alarmed at the sudden outburst of popular enthusiasm on behalf of liberty, began to feel that they were not doing their duty towards the people. Roused by the powerful pleadings of Dr. Wichern, of Hamburg, the Inner Mission was established, and an unofficial Church Diet (*Kirchentag*) was summoned, and continued to meet annually for several years, for the discussion of practical Church questions. The impulse then given to the religious life and activity of the Church has

not wholly died away, but it is felt that another awakening is needed if the Church is to be saved. The alarming progress of social democracy, as shown in the recent elections to the *Reichsrath* (Imperial Parliament), is forcing upon many minds the conviction that dark days are in store for the land. It was hoped that the astounding victories of 1870, and the establishment of a united Germany under the sway of a pious Emperor, would have a beneficial effect on the religious feelings of the nation, and lead to a more general attention to Church life and duties. But the hope has not been realised. On the contrary, the state of the country spiritually and morally is by all parties acknowledged to be growing worse from year to year. Dr. Tholuck, who, after a long and most useful career of nearly fifty years as theological professor at Halle, entered into his rest on the tenth of June—Dr. Tholuck said in the paper read for him at the Evangelical Alliance Conference, held in New York: "The new epoch that has been inaugurated, as far as human eye can see, proves itself to be an ever-proceeding dissolution of positive faith and Christian interest; and this is not the case in a few parts of the country, but throughout the whole of Germany." With sorrow we accept the statement. We can only hope and pray that God would speedily raise up many such men as Tholuck, to do for the religious and spiritual life what he pre-eminently did for its theological teaching.

The Gospel has still its attractive power when explained in a simple and earnest manner. This was seen in a remarkable way in Berlin a month or two ago, when for three weeks, day after day, thousands assembled to listen to the familiar explanations of Gospel truth given by George Müller, of Bristol. But in some quarters there is a disposition to frown upon all such efforts. The Church is thought to be placed in peril. Dissent, with its restless activity, and its attribution of the priestly function to all members of the Church of Christ, is held in much horror by many of the national ministers, and, unfortunately for Germany, the number of Dissenting communities is so small as not to exercise much influence in the land. But in the coming days, as the power of the State becomes more intrusive, and Liberalism obtains more influence in Church councils and in the direction of Church affairs, it may be that the longing for spiritual freedom among the Evangelical clergy and their people may become so strong as to compel them to an exodus. At present the signs of such a movement are not very apparent.

German Christianity has devised many new and interesting methods of religious activity. Much is done to promote social religious life among certain classes. Benevolent efforts have assumed many forms of practical utility. But in direct attempts to proclaim the Gospel to the masses of the people in the large towns, German Christians

have been sadly wanting. The quiet contemplative spirit that characterises the German mind is not, perhaps, favourable to such bold aggressive action, but unless some forward steps are taken and measures adopted for stemming the rushing tide of godlessness and infidelity, German Protestantism will soon be borne along towards that chaos of unbelief and materialism into which so much of European society is rapidly merging. We trust, however, that a better future is reserved for the land of Luther. Days of trouble and distress have in the past proved times of revival for the Church. May the upheavings of society which must soon ensue, if present signs are at all to be trusted, lead to the liberation of the Church, and to the quickening and intensifying of the religious life still remaining in the land!

R. S. A.



A PLEA FOR FEMALE DEACONS.

THE topic discussed by Dr. Aveling in the April number of the CONGREGATIONALIST—namely, the division of labour among the members of the diaconate—seems to raise a question as to how it comes about that none but male members of the Church are ever chosen to fill the office to which the article refers. For our own part, we cannot understand why this rule should have come to be tacitly and universally observed. On the contrary, there seem to be many strong reasons why ladies should not only be deemed eligible for office, but should, in certain cases, be preferred to gentlemen. We should like to state concisely some of the considerations which induce us to hold this opinion.

We shall probably be met at starting with an objection based on the phraseology of the New Testament. For example, some brethren of conservative tendencies will remind us of the familiar passage in the Acts of the Apostles, so generally quoted as the authoritative basis upon which the office of deacon rests: "Wherefore look ye out among you seven *men* of honest report." Others, again, will refer to St. Paul's words: "Let your *women* keep silence in your churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak"—forgetting that two or three chapters earlier the Apostle had spoken of a woman *prophesying* (1 Cor. xi. 5)—not as blameworthy on that account, but only when it chanced that she was in the habit of doing so "with her head uncovered." The reply to such objections as these seems to be very simple. Regulations based upon the customs and prejudices of the age can only be regarded as of force among those who were bound by such customs, and should never

be permitted to restrict the liberties of those who live in free countries and in more liberal days.

We contend that women equally with men should be deemed eligible for election to office in the diaconate of our Churches. They are subject to no disqualification in regard to membership; their admission to Church fellowship is in no way different from that by means of which men are received; and in all questions of business arising in our Church meetings, the votes of males and females are regarded as of equal weight. Nor are the ladies denied the privilege of *working* for the Church. This is so far from being the case, that eloquent testimony is continually borne at annual and other special gatherings to "the invaluable services rendered by the ladies of the congregation." It is only when we come to the actual administration of Church affairs that we find our sisters virtually excluded by an invidious and unwise custom. The genius of our broad and free congregationalism is dishonoured by any law which disqualifies so large a proportion of our membership on no other ground than that of sex. The fact that the rule is only a tradition, and that it is to be found written in none of the many versions of our declaration of Church principles, does but aggravate the evil instead of mitigating it. Christian women are quietly ignored whenever our Churches proceed to the choice of deacons—not because they are unqualified to discharge the several duties of the office, but simply because they *are* women. In practice, it may be, many Christian ladies are found in some of our Churches doing excellent work, very similar in kind to that usually regarded as appertaining to the office of deacon; but such work is not recognised as being officially performed, even by those who are compelled to admit that it is done as well, if not better, than it would have been by Deacon Smith or Deacon Jones.

In our judgment the Church suffers serious loss by the operation of a rule which restricts eligibility to office in the diaconate solely to one sex. And these, among others, are the grounds upon which we base our opinion:—

1. Increasing claims upon the time and energies of the pastor render it more needful now than was probably the case in years gone by, that a large share of the spiritual oversight of the Church should be left to the deacons. Reference was made in the CONGREGATIONALIST to the plan of dividing towns into districts, assigning each district to one of the deacons, who shall be held in some sense responsible for the members residing within its boundaries. From an examination of many Church manuals, we gather that this plan is being very generally adopted, either for the purpose of encouraging regular attendance at the Lord's Supper, for the visitation of the sick, the relief of the poorer members, or for

other assistance to the pastor in his work. Is it not evident that in many cases the work thus assigned to the deacons would be more appropriately and more efficiently performed if it were left in the hands of Christian ladies, possessed of the requisite spiritual and other qualifications? In the majority of cases, probably, it would be better for visits to relieve temporal distress, or to impart Christian consolation in bereavement and sorrow, to be performed by persons of the same sex as those to whom the visits are paid. Most women in circumstances of trouble and distress would, we think, prefer to unburden their souls to some kindly sympathetic sister-soul, rather than to one of the opposite sex, however respected and esteemed he might be. If it be replied that very much of this kind of thing is already provided for by the machinery of our Church institutions, in which ladies are actively employed as visitors, our rejoinder is that if some women are found to be specially adapted for such work as *members*, why should they be deemed disqualified for its performance as *officers* of the Church?

2. Then there is the visitation of candidates for Church fellowship. The practice in this matter varies greatly, and many Churches we know practically assign the task of visiting female candidates to female members nominated for the purpose. In others, however, we believe no such candidate would be regarded as legitimately eligible for admission to the Church until after the inquiry by one or more of the deacons as to her Christian experience and religious views. Happily, more Scriptural views than formerly prevailed are now generally held in reference to this question of spiritual experience. The text which describes the people of God as "speaking often one to another," and the promise of the Psalmist to "declare what God had done for his soul," are not now quite so commonly taken to require the parade of Christian experience on the housetops or in the market-places; nor are quiet and reserved Christians quite so rashly denounced as destitute of vital godliness because they are not accustomed to talk about the inner life as readily as about the common concerns of the outer world. We deem all this to be a healthy sign; but we think there is yet room for improvement. Where candidates for Christian fellowship are required to have an interview with one or more persons besides the pastor, it is impossible to exercise too much discretion in the selection of those to whom the duty of conversing with such candidates should be assigned. It is well to remember that some persons (especially young people) will converse readily and without reserve with one to whom they feel themselves drawn by sympathy, while they would be well nigh if not entirely dumb, in the presence of another. If, therefore, it would be of service to the Church that experienced Christian ladies should take their proper place as visitors of the sick and sorrowing members,

much more should they be invested with the needful authority to confer with, and report at deacons' meetings concerning, candidates of their own sex.

3. No one who has had any extensive experience of the variety of matters calling for earnest and serious deliberation in the deacons' vestry, can fail to remember many occasions on which the counsel and advice of experienced Christian ladies would have been of invaluable service. Many new schemes of Church work have to be discussed in the vestry before they are sufficiently matured for presentation to a meeting of the entire Church. Not a few blunders would be avoided if, among those over whose deliberations the pastor has had to preside, there were some ladies to contribute their quota of practical suggestions to the discussion. We have, ere now, heard of cases in which, as a ready means of securing female counsel in special emergencies, the pastor's wife and the wives of the deacons have been called in as advisers. It does not follow, however, that such a plan would secure the wisest counsel. It is by no means certain that the wife of the pastor and the wives of the deacons are always the ladies who are best qualified to form a judgment in these matters. Other ladies may have known the Church longer, and may have had more to do with its work.

Seriously, however, we contend that in every way the Church would gain immensely if the unwritten law disqualifying female members for office in the diaconate were practically abolished. Assuming that the passage already quoted from the Acts be a record of the earliest choice of deacons, we argue that the spirit of the Apostolic regulation is observed only when, as in modern Acts of Parliament, we substitute the word "persons" for "men." The Church needs prudent counsellors and efficient workers; "wherefore look ye out among you" persons "of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom ye may appoint over this business."

F. W.

THE PRIESTS AND THE NATION.

"WE have reached a very critical stage in this Ritualist controversy," says the *Times*; and the opinion is one which men of all parties will endorse as they will echo the wish that the "authorities of the Church will not allow themselves to be made simply ridiculous." Unfortunately there is not much to encourage the belief that this charitable wish will be fulfilled. The expression comes at the close of an article which exposes the mistakes that have been committed in the St. Vedast and Hatcham cases, and in consequence of which the

judgment in the former has been nullified, and that on Mr. Tooth is exposed to a similar risk. The article is therefore intended as a warning to their lordships. But the failures of which it speaks are of a piece with the extraordinary weakness which has marked the policy of the Episcopal Bench throughout this protracted struggle. The crisis through which the Church is passing to-day is only the latest of a now numerous series, and in every one of them the same vacillation and feebleness have been displayed. It may safely be said that in all, the one aim of the Bishops has been to employ such palliatives as might allay the popular excitement which the audacious aggressions of the Ritualists had aroused, and that by failing to deal effectually with the particular difficulty of the moment, they have insured its recurrence in a more aggravated form. It is almost cruel to say that they have made themselves ridiculous, for the blame rests on the system rather than on the individuals; but they have gone far to prove that, in the present condition of Church and State, it is idle to expect that the bishops can or will show themselves true rulers of the Church. The truth is, that the continuance of the Establishment means nothing less than a state of anarchy, and it would be as unfair to blame the Bishops for not taking a decided line of action, which might precipitate a conflict in which the State Church would certainly fall, as it would be, on the other hand, to reproach Parliament for not having recourse to fresh legislation, although the changes in its constitution have made it utterly unfit for the exercise of that power, and would deprive its laws of any moral influence over the very classes whom it is desired to affect. The evil grows up out of the attempt, as vain now as ever, to keep new wine in old bottles, and to insist on maintaining in this nineteenth century institutions which, however tolerable, so long as the authority of the Church was unquestioned and the religious unity of the nation unbroken, is simply unendurable now.

Our ecclesiastical system is nothing better than a gigantic sham. The Episcopal Church is assumed to be the Church of the nation, and men like the Dean of Westminster write as though it were really so, in utter contempt of the facts that one half of the people have gone absolutely away from it; that it has abandoned even the pretence to exercise its proper functions as a National Church, and is content to enter into rivalry with other Christian communities, that every day shows more clearly that it is and can be nothing more than a privileged sect, and that its boasted nationality really means, and at heart is regarded by most of its ardent defenders as meaning, nothing more than sectarian supremacy. The endeavour to preserve the shadow of a national Church, after the reality has departed, does in fact lie at the root of the present confusion. The Church cannot govern itself, for the nation

will not allow ecclesiastical independence in a body on which it confers civil privileges. On the other hand, it will not quietly submit to the rule of Parliament because, as its clergy say—and, looking at it from their point, with perfect justice—Parliament cannot be regarded as representing the laity of the Church.

We are thus surrounded by make-believes, which for the present are accepted as realities, and delude the nation with an idea or rule which has no actual existence. We are sometimes warned in very grave tones of the perils which the nation would incur if the check which the Establishment puts upon sacerdotalism were removed, and are expected to deal with the argument seriously in presence of facts which show that Anglican priests are practically under no control from the State, and in fact are using the position in which the State places them to push forward their encroachments. It is the wonderful capacity which large bodies of people have for accepting a make-believe as a reality, that leads to the reiteration of an argument which will not bear exposure to the light of day.

If, however, there be authority left anywhere, it seems as though there would be abundant opportunities of demonstrating its existence, and the sooner they are used the better for the country and the nation. Those who remember how often the country has been agitated by some fresh outrage on the Protestant feeling of the nation on the part of the Ritualist conspirators, as it is now the fashion to call them; how the introduction of the surplice into the pulpit not only called forth fierce Evangelical denunciations, but stirred the populace of the East-end to frenzy and riot; how the doings at St. Barnabas created in their day a scandal as great as those even at St. James', Hatcham; how the first display of the vestments, and the open inculcation of the Romish doctrine they are intended to symbolise, aroused a storm of righteous indignation which threatened to sweep the whole party out of the Church; how even on this very subject of Confession we have had more than one angry excitement already, as when Mr. Poole was deprived of his license, or later still, when 483 clergymen called upon the bishops to appoint a distinct order of confessors,—may well hesitate to believe that even the present agitation, intense and passionate as is the feeling of the hour, will end in anything serious. But whether this excitement prove as transient and as profitless as others which have preceded it, it has certainly laid hold of the nation to an extent which has not previously been witnessed. Lord Redesdale's speech has kindled a fire which shows no signs at present of being extinguished. Indeed, if the Bishops were able to extinguish it, as some of them seem only too willing to do, it would only be the worse for the Bishops and the interests their excessive jealousy for which makes them so feeble and trimming.

The "Priest in Absolution" has attained a notoriety as extended and as evil as that of Knowlton's book, and the clergy whose names are associated with it are denounced as conspirators, not only against Protestantism, but even against public morals. That hard statements have been made and indiscriminating charges flung out without any care to consider their justice, was only to be expected, and those who have done so much to arouse popular fury must accept a share of the responsibility for any excesses into which it may be betrayed. It will not do for those who have abused the influence which the State has given them to promote ends abhorrent to every right-minded Englishman, who have been seeking to find access to men's houses in order to establish a priestly influence over their wives and daughters, who have been craftily leading back the people to a bondage which our fathers were not able to bear, to put on an air of injured innocence as soon as they are detected, and complain that they have to listen to some very strong language. In a time of passion and of panic men are not careful in their allegations nor very choice in their words. We should be sorry to have to establish every accusation that has been made, but every allowance is to be made for any heat that may have been displayed. It is to be observed that the feeling is quite as strong in men of the world, who care little for theological distinctions, and are not identified with any Church party, as with those who may regard the Ritualists as ecclesiastical rivals.

The Evangelicals appeal in characteristic style to the Protestant traditions and sentiments of the nation, but their utterances lack the directness, the incisive force, the trenchant resolution which may be found in the denunciation of those who look at the affair from an outside point, and in what may be regarded as a secular spirit. The *World*, for example, after announcing in that self-sufficient tone of infallibility which a fashionable journalist can assume as well as an Erastian prelate, that "sensible persons"—that is, of course, persons who agree with the writer—are supremely indifferent to the peculiar doctrines and rites of "ecclesiastical zealots and fantastic religionists," goes on to point out how the tolerance of this class may be exhausted: "So long as the 'priest' does not stand in our sunlight, does not pry into our domestic privacy," he may be allowed to teach as he pleases, dress as he pleases, have what rites he pleases. "So long as doctrines which are a grotesque and contemptible caricature of other creeds, held by clergymen of the Church of England do not result in any positive offence and nuisance to society, there is no necessity for the Legislature to prohibit them. When, on the other hand, we find that the ecclesiastics who array themselves in multi-coloured robes, gabble the liturgy, and introduce into the service of the Church of England a variety of

minor acrobatic displays, assert their privilege and their duty to step in between husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, we tell them that they have overstepped the boundary, and that they must at once recede into their own territory. So long as these men are the paid servants of the public, the salaried ministers of the State Establishment, we have a right to expect that the work of warning them off ground on which they presume to tread shall be done by the State, by the Bishops, or by the secular Government."

Now the Ritualists may probably despise all this, and treat it only as an exhibition of the temper of that evil world against which it is their privilege as well as their duty to fight. To an extent we agree with them. We can have no sympathy with the cynical tone of papers which glory in their contempt of all principle, whether in politics or religion. They represent one of the very worst schools of the times, but it happens to be both numerous and powerful. It glories in being an embodiment of the common sense which aims only at practical objects and does not greatly trouble itself about theories. It is as shallow as it is conceited, as may be seen from the above extract; but it has influence, and when that influence is joined to the power of deep religious conviction in those to whom the priest is a dishonour to Christianity as well as a nuisance to society, the party against which these forces are united is in evil case. If the feelings of this large class are really aroused it may safely be predicted that the present movement will not be without result. It might have been expected that earnest Christian men would resent the patronage which this class extend to the Established Church as an insult, for there is hardly an attempt to deny that it is given under the belief that as a Church it will be less troublesome if kept in subjection by the State than if it be free. But should that patronage be withdrawn, the end of the Establishment is not distant. That this will be the case unless the priest is suppressed is announced with a frankness that is almost brutal. If Bishops cannot or will not "protect society against the sacerdotal nuisance that has now grown to a head," we are told, "we must appeal to that power on which the ecclesiastical authorities themselves depend, which makes Bishops and unfrocks clergy—the State;" and again: "The Primate has denounced these men as conspirators against the Reformed Church; they are worse than this, they are conspirators against our social peace and happiness. English manliness and independence of character are a unique growth, because English emancipation from the traditions of priestcraft is unique also. If the responsible rulers of the Church will not or cannot prevent a process that must end in the reversal of all this, it will be for the civil power to extirpate the evil." It is very certain that if England had not had men of a very different stamp from that of

this school the deliverance from priestcraft, in which Englishmen so much exult, would never have been accomplished. But being free they are able now to hold their own and put down a power they might not have been prepared to face had it still been in its supremacy. "The sacerdotal treason we have to deal with (says the *Pall Mall Gazette*) in our own camp is too clumsy and contemptible to be terrible." But this does not inspire even a contemptuous pity. On the contrary, we are told "*it is a thing not to be fought with, but to be crushed. Crushed it must be, none the less.*"

To those who, like all intelligent Nonconformists, have always maintained that the germ of sacerdotalism and of all its attendant evils is in the Prayer-book, and capable of being developed to any extent to which the audacity of the clergy would venture and which the patience of the people endure, there is something very astonishing in the excitement of the last month. Bishops have been talking with unusual force and point, Convocation has taken what it probably intends and believes to be a decided attitude, journalists have been stirred to passionate indignation and violent language, and all about what? A book, the first part of which has been circulated for nearly ten years, and the character of whose directions to confessors, as contained in the second part, was unveiled by the *Rock* more than three years ago, and which is itself only one of a class, as the Primate has now discovered, and is able to inform his right reverend brethren. What is more, these books themselves are only the instruments of a system designed to crush independence, to subject the consciences of men to the sway of the priest, to establish that rule of confessors and directors which is the curse of the Continent at present, and which must be the curse of any people among whom it is introduced. The *Pall Mall Gazette* is perfectly right when, going to the root of the matter, it identifies the sacerdotalism which is thus pushing its encroachments amongst us with the Ultramontanism that is disturbing both France and Germany. But if this be so, how is it that the alarm has not been raised before? This "invasion of pseudo-Ultramontane immorality" has not been carrying on its operations so much in secret that the professed guides of the public, and especially the authorised rulers of the National Church, can pretend to have been in ignorance on this subject. Could they suppose that the confessional boxes, of which we have heard in some of the Ritualist churches, were introduced merely for purposes of ornament? Have they treated all the publications of the school on the subject of confession as unmeaning? In short, will any Bishop undertake to say that he was unaware that the practice was widespread and continually extending; that it was inculcated from many pulpits, and enforced by numbers of the clergy with all the argument and influence they were able to command; that

there were priests who had gained a special reputation by their skill as confessors? The "Church and the World" was not an obscure book, and the striking—we might more correctly call it the ghastly—narrative of a confession contained in a lady's autobiography in the first series ought to have been enough to awaken the vigilance of the Bishops. It showed that so far back as 1849 the practice of confession had been reduced to a regular system by a certain school, whose members were in intimate and constant correspondence with each other, and whose proceedings were full of menace to the interests of Protestantism and liberty. The thought of confession was suggested "*partly from hearing of it as so much resorted to by those who were really in earnest.*" The priest to whom the writer first mentioned her wish to confess encouraged her in it, but instead of confessing her himself wrote to a priest in London, and placed the case in his hands. It was not then an individual who gratified a mere fancy of her own, but one who found herself amid friends who were in the habit of confessing, and who on applying to her own clergyman is transferred by him to one whose skill in the art is known to him, on the ground that "confessions should not be made to intimate friends." The account of her confession is as suggestive as it is appalling. "Nearly six hours on two successive days" were occupied by it, and in relation to it she writes: "The scene of the confession itself I could not venture to recall. It was months before I could let my thoughts return to it, and even now I cannot dwell upon it without the shrinking with which in after life men recall a severe surgical operation, although they may also feel, as I feel, thankfulness for its results." If this story had stood alone it ought to have been a warning as to what was going on. Even in 1849 the Church had its confessors and their dupes; in 1866 the fact was brought out in this impressive manner. How is it that in 1877 we have this commotion about it, as though it were a novelty of yesterday? Would the Primate and his suffragans have slumbered on if Lord Redesdale had not sounded a blast which has called forth an echo from the country at large, against which even the slumbers of Sleepy Hollow would not be proof?

But now that the excitement has been created, to what practical issue is it tending? That the Ritualists have no idea of yielding is evident. They are prepared to throw the objectionable book overboard in order to lighten the ship; but as to changing the course of the vessel itself, that seems to be the last proposal they will entertain. They will face the fiercest storm rather than compromise what they hold to be the Divine rights of the priesthood. The manner in which the Society of the Holy Cross has conducted itself in the midst of the popular odium to which it has been exposed, is instructive. It is interesting, for example, to learn

that there are so many of the members of the Society, whose sanction the book enjoys, who have never read it themselves, and that even of those who possess it, some have always kept it under lock and key, and are ignorant of its contents. The ideas of duty which will permit clergymen to give even an indirect sanction to a book on so grave a subject without reading it are so eccentric, that if they ever confess themselves, it would perhaps be wise for them, on the occasion of their next confession, to take the opinion of their spiritual director upon the subject. It must not be supposed, however, that those who thus disclaim all knowledge of the book, repudiate the practices for which it is intended to supply a guide. An experienced confessor will, of course, be able to dispense with the use of a Manual, and much importance is not, therefore, to be attached to a statement, on the part of a priest, that he has not actually used the book. One thing is certain. The practice of confession means a kind of cross-examination, such as that which the Manual suggests, whenever the priest may consider it necessary. He may never have seen the book in question at all; he may have confined himself simply to the study of the Manuals of the Romish Church, from which it has been compiled; he may even have trusted to his own insight and skill, and yet he may carry on the same indelicate scrutiny into the thoughts and feelings of the penitents who seek his ghostly aid.

Even if the disavowals of the book had been much more distinct and positive than they are, they would have been of little value, unless they had been accompanied by a repudiation of the practice. But of this we hear nothing either from individuals or the Society itself. On the contrary, these clergymen place themselves in the attitude of martyrs whose great services to the Church are overlooked, and who are persecuted for their fidelity to their missions as priests. Advantage is taken of the repute they have acquired as preachers or "missioners" to excite sympathy on their behalf, and the wickedness of suspecting such holy men of any wrong is suggested, if not positively asserted. Thus Mr. Knox-Little, who won such popularity during the Manchester Mission week, and has been appointed to a living in that city, is reported to have made in one of his sermons "an earnest protest against the vile calumnies which he said had been circulated against the Society of the Holy Cross, and said that he fully intended to continue the practice of confession, and offered if any of his people thought that his teaching was in any way corrupting or pernicious, to resign the rectory of St. Albans." This is an entirely new idea of the relations between the clergy of the Anglican Church and their congregations. We thought that it was a clergyman's duty to conform to the law of the land, but Mr. Knox-Little seems to think it enough that he should satisfy his own congrega-

tion. But waiving this, we note only how the influence of this popular preacher is employed to shield the Society and its book, and to enforce the practice itself. And the Bishop of Manchester does his best to strengthen the hands of his priest by classing the Society of the Holy Cross in the same category as the Church Association, distinguishing between both alike from the "moderate, earnest, sober-minded people who stand aloof."

The Society itself takes a lofty tone. After conference with the Primate, a chapter was convened and a document was agreed upon, which was intended to explain the actual position of the Society in relation to the book, and so far as was practicable satisfy the mind of Convocation. It begins with a recital of the great work done by the Ritualist school, especially in connection with missions. If we are to trust its statements, these clergy have been the salt of the Church. Such a recital may not be very modest, but there is a great deal of truth in it, and it tells so much on their side, that they would have shown much less than their usual judgment if they had not put it prominently forward. Nor are we sorry they should have done so, for it may help to remind those who are so ready to profit by their labours, that they cannot use them without ministering to the growth of that sacerdotalism they so earnestly deprecate. The reference to these good works may have been something more than an appeal to character. At least it may remind the world that the men now impeached have been the associates of others of the clergy in some of their holiest enterprises. Nor can it be urged that those who entered into such alliance were in ignorance of the kind of teaching given by those with whom they were thus associated. That these "missions" were used by many for the purpose of promoting the practice of confession was so notorious, that few, we suppose, would plead ignorance of it. How the Bishops who have encouraged the "missions" and the "mission-priests" felt under the allusion we do not presume to inquire. But here the Ritualists certainly scored a point, as against their adversaries in the Church, and against the Bishops themselves. They occupied a vantage-ground, from the fact that they were dealing with men who, if they did not know what confession has always meant, and that the Ritualist clergy had been doing their best to promote the practice for years, ought to have known it, and who had encouraged them notwithstanding.

But the true reply to all such plausible suggestions on behalf of the defendants in this great cause, in which it is the people of England and not the Bishops only who are plaintiffs, is that the point at issue is neither the consistency of the Prelates, nor the personal excellence of the accused, nor even their relation to the impugned book, but the evil practice to which these clergy stand committed. The Society of the

Holy Cross has, as the Bishops, with a decision somewhat unusual in their august body, pronounce, "neither repudiated, nor effectually withdrawn from circulation, that work," and we are very thankful it has not done so. For the English people are so apt to satisfy themselves with some victory of this kind, which really comes to nothing, that if this concession had been frankly and thoroughly made, there would have been no slight risk of a subsidence of the agitation, without any real check to the evil. All that the Chapter did, however, was to withdraw the book in deference to the wishes of the Bishops, at the same time "distinctly repudiating the unfair criticisms" upon it, guarding against the possibility of any condemnation of it being inferred from their act, and asserting as emphatically as possible the principles on which it is based. The *Times* has pointed out the disingenuous character of the apology they have attempted on its behalf by completing a quotation which they gave in a mutilated form. We give the quotation entire, the omitted parts being in italics. "The writer's object," we are told, "in entering on this subject of spiritual pathology, is to aid the priest to avoid needless and dangerous inquiries, *and at the same time not to omit probing the wounds of sin when necessary for the patients' cure, often not only in soul but also in body and mind.*" Comment is unnecessary. Such a mode of controversy as this shows that these Anglicans have not escaped the vice that is found in sacerdotalism everywhere. Here, on an occasion of the utmost importance to themselves as well as to the Church to which they belong, they resort to a paltry subterfuge, and are weak enough to suppose that it will pass undetected.

Their desire is to persuade us that the confessor does not lend himself to the prurient questioning of which Lord Redesdale gave the House of Lords an example, that he is a listener rather than an active inquisitor, and that, at worst, it is only in exceptional cases and for special purposes that he has recourse to this active scrutiny. But, as the *Times* again tells us, the Advertisement to the reader at the beginning of the second part, distinctly says that "contrition can sometimes be excited only by the interrogations of the priest." "He complains," it adds, "that the 'Aatholic' or Protestant mind is set very much against questioning the penitent, and states that the priest *has to try and scrutinise the soul, to see if it be fit to be cleansed.*" It is evident from this that confession, in its most obnoxious form is practised by these clergy, and though they talk about safeguards, they omit, as the *Times* tells us, to add that they are precisely those which are laid down by Roman Catholic writers, and would count for no more. To ourselves, and a great many Protestants besides, all these points go for nothing, except as revelations of disingenuousness on the part of these priestly offenders. We believe their system to be precisely that of the Romish Church, but if it were

modified in some of the features which have most exposed it to suspicion, if it were fenced round by all possible protections, if none but men of mature age and approved character were allowed to hear confessions, our position would not be altered. We object not to the abuses, but to the thing itself, and unless Protestantism take this ground it will be defeated in the struggle.

Attention has been concentrated principally on the questioning relative to the seventh commandment. It was natural that it should be so, for there is nothing which so directly touches men; but it is, in a sense, unfortunate. For not only does the very nature of the subject prevent the full discussion which is desirable, but points equally important are in danger of being omitted. We object to the confessor himself and the kind of influence which he establishes over the minds of those who lay themselves at his feet, and especially the young. We have before us, "A Prayer-book for the Young," published by Mowbray, of Oxford, so far back as 1862, to which we briefly referred last month. Its directions to children on the subject of self-examination are just as suggestive and injurious as those which Lord Redesdale adduced. But of these we will not speak. The object of the book, we are told, is to be "a not altogether useless assistant in the task, which they (clergy and laity) would recognise as all-important, of bringing the Church system to bear upon the everyday life and habits of their children and dependants." We are curious to know what proportion of the laity of the Church would like to have their children trained in the absolute submission to the priest, the ignominious superstitions relative to sacraments and religious services in general, the bitterness, malice, and uncharitableness which this book inculcates, and which would be enforced at the confessional, to which children are urged to resort. These are strong words, but a few extracts will justify them. Here are some directions from the Rule of Life, or "what every Christian must do in order to be saved:" "Be constant and careful in your use of the means of grace God has left in His holy Church, such as Confession and Holy Communion. Don't put off Confirmation too long, or delay your first communion; this is a great sin. Go if possible to receive the Blessed Sacrament *fasting*. I do not mean that you should eat *less* only before the Communion, but that you should absolutely suffer *food at all* to pass your lips. If you cannot do this *speaking to your clergyman about it, and he will tell you what to do.*" Again: "Children are not bound to fast, but they should abstain from meat on all fast days and abstinence days, and also should voluntarily deny themselves little things they like on those days. *If they are too weak to go without meat, they should obtain leave to eat it from their priest.*" Of the wisdom of this ascetic teaching we say nothing here. The point to be observed is the way in which the supremacy of the

priest over the life of the child is asserted. Granted that the abstinence recommended is good for children in general, we should have thought that it was the doctor with whom should rest the decision as to its unfitness for any particular case. But even here the dark figure of the priest intrudes. The one object of the teaching seems to be to impress the child with the idea that its whole life is to be under the control of its spiritual director. Of other lessons inculcating Romish doctrines and practices we have an abundance, but the root of all is the recognition of the power of the priest, and the necessity for seeking the grace ministered by him in absolution. Here is the view given of Confession. After telling us, in contradiction to the express teaching of the Prayer-book, that "confession is one of the lesser sacraments instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ," the writer goes on to urge its frequent practice. The child is reminded, "He (Jesus) wishes to try your love for Him, and see if it is real; and so He has made a part of this sacrament be the laying open all your sins without excuse or wilful omission to the priest, and if this is unpleasant to you, think how great and joyful a thing it is to be restored to the friendship of God, to have your sins forgiven and forgotten; to be once more loved by the blessed saints and angels, and to be taken out of the power of the Devil, who wishes to have you with him in hell for ever. All this is yours, if with *real sorrow* you go to confession." After this it is hardly necessary to add, "*How foolish and miserable are those who are willing to lose Heaven and go to hell for not saying a few words with openness and sincerity to their confessor, who is their spiritual father, who is bound to secrecy, and who loves their souls, and has compassion for their weakness.*"

After reading such exhortations as these, the self-righteous and uncharitable temper fostered by the following questions for self-examination seems a very small matter. And yet it is not really an unimportant point that one part of the nation should be trained to bigoted contempt and aversion towards the other. The self-righteousness engendered is bad,—the uncharitableness is worse. If it were merely a piece of private conceit and narrowness, of course it must be left to cure itself. But these clergy are the servants and representatives of the nation, and in this capacity they, under the sanction of the State, are educating the children who come under their influence in hatred to others who are equally part of the nation with themselves. In the questions for self-examination on the second commandment, we have this: "Have I attended the meeting-houses of Dissenters, or the worship of any other false religion?" This really will not hurt Dissenters, who may very well be content that those who teach children to regard the Lord's Supper as a "Holy Sacrifice," at which they are bound to "assist" on Sundays or holidays of obligation; who instruct them to offer prayers

for the dead ; who bid them ask the Lord that " Holy Mary, Thy most Blessed Mother, and all the Holy Saints may pray for them, and their dear guardian angels watch over them," would regard theirs as a false religion. But it is for the nation to consider whether it wishes to have its children trained in this spirit and doctrine.

If other proof were insufficient, the book would show whither we have been drifting, and might well justify anxiety, though not alarm. We do not believe there is real danger, because we believe that the heart of the nation is sound. There is the religious Protestantism which Nonconformists have mainly developed and sustained. There is the more secular Protestantism, which would tolerate bishops and clergy, and even give them the honours and immunities of an Establishment in order to hold them in check, but which will not tolerate priests, and will sacrifice the Establishment itself, rather than allow it to be made the instrument of setting up the darkest and most crushing of all despotisms—the spiritual despotism of the priest in the land. These two forces are strong enough to do battle for English liberty, but it is important that the ground on which the conflict is to be fought out be clearly defined. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, in the very able article to which we have already referred, shows that the party on behalf of which it speaks are beginning to have a truer conception of the real bearings of the controversy. The following passage goes to the root of the whole evil, and advocates a reform which is enough to make moderate Churchmen—not excluding some Evangelicals—stand aghast :—

" Not binding, only loosing is wanted. We have but to make it clear that the English clergyman is a minister and not a magician, and those who feel themselves nothing if they cannot be magicians will speedily find so large a room all too narrow for their ambition. The plain course is to strike out of the Prayer-book all passages in which there is the appearance of priestly absolution, and above all to strike at the root of the priestly superstition by omitting the laying on of hands in the Ordination Service. This remedy is not now proposed for the first time ; it may be a daring one, but it would probably go farther towards saving the Establishment than any less searching measure that could be applied. Those who believe in the Apostolic Succession will be shocked by such a proposal. No doubt ; but we want to shock them. There are many who care nothing for the Apostolic Succession, but would shrink from abandoning an ancient and venerable ceremony. To them we would say, with all respect, that on our side we have authority which, if less ancient, is for English Churchmen hardly less venerable. Let them study the mind of the English Reformers in the preface to the Book of Common Prayer, especially the chapter 'Of Ceremonies, why some be abolished and some retained,' and they will hardly fail to allow that if those men were now alive they would be ready to do this and more also to defend the hard-won liberties of the English people from an invasion of pseudo-Ultramontane immorality."

This is no doubt the sound view for a Protestant Churchman to take. But what hope can any rational man entertain that such a reform will be accomplished? Let him read the reports of the recent debates in Convocation, and he must be sanguine indeed, if, after them, he looks for much help from that clerical assembly. The Bishops have been slow to move,—have not moved till they were compelled,—are clearly, even now, anxious to do as little as possible. A few strong and decided speeches, which would have gone from one end of the land to the other, and called forth responsive echoes in every quarter, would have encouraged the belief that they were equal to the crisis, and would make some heroic effort to save the Establishment for Protestantism. But it is clear that they are not strong enough for the times, and indeed some of them showed that they had too much sympathy for the clergy whose action had been impugned, to utter any very emphatic condemnation, still less to adopt any decided measures against them. To suppose that they will listen to proposals that would sweep away all traces of the Apostolic Succession and the priesthood [from the Prayer-book, is to dream the wildest of dreams. But can such a reform be carried in opposition to them and the clergy by whom they would be sustained? It would be infinitely easier to secure Disestablishment. In the meantime we can only rejoice in the wonderful progress the article indicates. The Ritualist priests have taught English laymen—who have been extremely reluctant to touch the Establishment—that the Prayer-book must be revolutionised, or the national Church will become a peril to English liberty and English morality. They have only to be convinced that this cannot be done, to induce them to become advocates of Disestablishment. The *Times* warns the Bishops, that “unless they can get rid of these ‘conspirators’—be they good or bad—the people of England will, before long, make short work of the institution that shelters them.” There can be little doubt which of these alternatives is the more probable.



ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

THE air is thick with manifestoes and rumours of manifestoes. In addition to an address of loyalty to the Bishops, which must have greatly refreshed their hearts, we have two grave and portentous documents. One is a memorial from Deans, Archdeacons, and other dignitaries of the moderate High Church party, and some laymen of similar spirit, who seem uncertain whether they shall cast in their lot with the Bishops and the cause of order, or shall boldly unfurl the flag or revolt against Cæsar and his aggressions. The other is a petition to the

Queen from 41,000 of her subjects—clerical and lay—calling upon her to secure greater liberty to the Church, overborne by the despotism of her Privy Council. Beyond these, we hear of declarations and petitions on both sides. Wives and mothers who have themselves profited by confession are to testify to their Sovereign as to the facts; while, on the other hand, certain peers of the realm are to unite in a protest against this un-English abomination, and the school which is seeking to establish it amongst us. But we need not deal with these at present. Sufficient unto the day are the new contributions just added to the store of "demonstration" literature, extensive enough before, which this controversy has called forth. A collection of all documents of this kind which have appeared from one side or the other during the last forty years would be one of the most extraordinary curiosities of polemics. What good has been done by these successive documents it would not be easy to see. They are framed with extreme caution, circulated at immense trouble and cost, and introduced to the world with a loud flourish of trumpets. Their authors employ their ingenuity to word them so as to secure an imposing number of signatures, and especially those of men of mark. In due season their advent is announced in mysterious paragraphs, hinting at some wonderful *coup* which is to astonish the world, and when public curiosity has been sufficiently whetted we have the great document duly laid before the world. There was a time when such a manifesto was a nine days' wonder. Its terms were eagerly scanned, its signatures carefully scrutinised, its exact importance anxiously discussed. But Churchmen seem to have forgotten the homely old proverb that "familiarity breeds contempt," and they multiply manifestoes, just as they multiply Bishops, to such an extent that they fail to produce the impression which once they made.

Whether the documents before us will exercise any appreciable influence on the controversy is extremely doubtful. All the world knows that the higher a clergyman's position, the more anxious is he that things should go *toujours tranquille*; and it is not very surprising therefore to find that a number of Deans and others, including among them even some who have taken a decided part, have agreed to recommend their brethren to acquiesce in the Ridsdale judgment. The first part of the document is so thoroughly in the spirit of the Bishop of Gloucester's article in the *Nineteenth Century* that his Lordship might have inspired it himself. The judgment must certainly be a singular one, for while the Evangelicals point to it as a triumph of theirs, these High Churchmen also find reason for satisfaction in it because (a) "it allows the Eastward position of the celebrant, (b) confirms the principle of a distinctive Eucharistic dress, (c) recognises the full right of the Church of England to the use of religious art in her churches." It would be hard to prove

that this is not a true representation of the facts, and, if it be so, harder still to see how this can be an Evangelical triumph. Impartial men, on the outside, would say that the Judges, having a Cerberus on each side, resolved to throw a sop to both. The only singular point is that each is so wonderfully satisfied with that which has fallen to its lot, and ready to ridicule the other as the victim of a delusion. These representative men of the Church, however, feel that something is yet lacking, and even in their counsels of peace introduce what sounds very like a menace of war: "We believe that the ultimate solution of our present difficulties will be found in the exercise by the Church of her legitimate right to deal with ceremonial through Convocation, with consent of Parliament." So even these lovers of quietness are not content to abandon the idea of an autonomy for the Church. Indeed, it would appear as though they intended to reconcile the recusants to the submission they recommend by an assurance of agreement with them in their fundamental principle, and their demand that the living voice of the Church should be heard. The address to the Bishops takes different ground, and assures their Lordships that the signatories are resolved "to bow to the decision" of their Lordships "in all matters concerning the service of the Church in which, the same having been diversely taken, and having been referred to them, they shall authoritatively declare their judgment." If this amiable spirit were universal there would, of course, be a fair prospect of peace, but neither the "declaration" nor the petition to the Queen warrants any such anticipation. The petition is more strong and decided. Indeed, it goes so far as to assert an authority for Convocation independent of the State altogether. Yet the names of such men as Dr. Pusey, Canon Liddon, and Canon Carter are among those of the 41,000 who protest against any "secular intervention," that is, who insist on an ecclesiastical revolution. That they will bring a revolution on we do not doubt, but it will be of a very different kind from that which they contemplate. The Church which is free from "secular intervention" will have to part with the distinction of a State Church.

The debate in the House of Commons on the Bill for the abolition of Church Rates in Scotland should be a warning to the leaders of the Scotch Establishment to put their house in order. It certainly needs only a vigorous effort in order to overthrow an institution which is so logically indefensible. Its real strength consists partly in the reluctance of English Churchmen to consent to another act of disestablishment, and partly in the comparative inoffensiveness of the Church itself. But it is impossible to maintain the Church of a minority as the Church of the nation. The absence of theological or even ecclesiastical differences

between the Established and the Free Churches really makes the injustice more glaring. The clergy of the former have status and privileges simply because they are content to do the will of the State. The doctrines of the three great Churches are the same; their mode of Church government is the same; their very methods of procedure are the same. Yet the ministers of the one have a right to treat all the rest as illegal intruders, for no other reason than because the State chooses to continue this distinction in favour of those who will accept its terms. It is amazing that such an anomaly could have existed so long after the secession of the Free Church placed the supporters of the Establishment in a minority. Even now it may be doubted whether the Scotch Church will fall before its English sister. The strife within the Anglican Church is forcing on an examination of the principle of Establishments, and it is far from impossible that both of these institutions may perish together.

An article in the *Nineteenth Century* by Mr. Grant Duff, who we may suppose gives the view of Liberal ex-officials on the "five nights' debate," has one or two sneers at Nonconformist policy. The writer is pleased to say that "few might think that the time had come for taking up the question of the Church of England." Freely translated, this means that the front Opposition Bench are not prepared to take it up. Be it so. We have no desire to hurry them. That may safely be left to the pressure of circumstances. But there is one point which Mr. Grant Duff raises that demands notice. He adopts and gives the authority of his name to an allegation which, so long as it was confined to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, might safely have been allowed to die out. It assumes a different complexion when a responsible politician can write—

"It would appear from the haste with which the Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Control came forward to address him, that an able and active knot of politicians had persuaded themselves that Mr. Gladstone would be just the man to lead them in a great agitation against the Established Church of England, which they, differing in this from the bulk of their party, believe to be nearer its fall than it is usually supposed to be, even by those who, unlike Mr. Gladstone, never had a word to say in defence of the principle of Establishments, and would never have raised a finger in their defence. These gentlemen pay a bad compliment to the eminent statesman they profess to honour in supposing that he is willing to build his *castella delle ultime* illusions out of the ruins of everything he most cherished when he began life; but still they repeat, 'He has changed before now, why not once more?' And this hope, strange to say, was one of the most important factors in inducing a portion of the Liberal party to support Mr. Gladstone's Resolutions on the affairs of the East. *Solvuntur risu tabule*, a foreign critic may say, but the statement is true, nevertheless."

Yet the foreign critic would be perfectly right. The statement carries absurdity on the face of it, as is obvious to all in whom the wish that it should be true is not father to the thought. Mr. Grant Duff's omniscience is defective in one point. He knows nothing of Dissenters, or he would never have committed himself to an assertion so incredible. It seems doubtful from the paragraph, whose sub-acid tone reveals his true feeling, whether he is most disposed to censure Mr. Gladstone or his Nonconformist allies, but he is equally unjust to both. Probably the former suffers most, as the critic insinuates that, after having accepted their support, he drew back, "aware perhaps of the ulterior views to which he was indebted for some of the support of the able and enterprising politicians whom I have described." Mr. Grant Duff is too clever by half. He has concerned himself so much with diplomacy, its subtleties and its intrigues, that he seems unable to understand that independent and honest men may reach the same conclusions without any sinister purpose or unfair understanding with each other.

For one point he is entitled to the gratitude of those whom he assails. His charges are made in a categorical form, and admit, therefore, of a denial as distinct and categorical as his own statement. His account of the transactions on which his allegations are based is purely mythical. The support given to Mr. Gladstone in his Eastern policy rested solely on the belief that he is the one trustworthy leader among our politicians on that subject, and was absolutely irrespective of any reference to the Church question. We think we may go further, and say that if the Marquis of Salisbury had broken loose from his colleagues and proposed similar resolutions, the same men would have arrayed themselves among his followers. That a sentiment of personal attachment to their distinguished leader was one element in the marvellous display of enthusiasm with which the proposals were hailed, and that the feeling was intensified by the conviction that those who ought to have proved themselves his trusty friends had behaved with a singular want of chivalry towards him, is unquestionable. But that there was also a very strong opinion in favour of an action which might prevent the Government from drifting into war on behalf of Turkey, is equally certain. The men who adopted the address were to a very large extent the leaders of the Liberal party in their respective boroughs. They were thoroughly saturated with that kind of sentiment which the *Pall Mall Gazette* is so eager to denounce, and would have gloried in the fact that they were sentimentalists of sentimentalists. Their shouts were meant to emphasise their condemnation of Turkey, their distrust of the Government, and their disappointment with the front Opposition bench as well as their confidence in Mr. Gladstone. To say that they were intended still further to express their hope that Mr. Gladstone would

undertake a crusade against the Established Church, is an assumption as baseless as it is unnecessary.

As Nonconformists at once and expressly repudiated any such purpose as has been attributed to them—first at the meeting of the Congregational Union and afterwards at the great Birmingham demonstration—there is something more than a lack of courtesy in the repetition of the insinuation by Mr. Grant Duff. We should have pursued precisely the same course if we knew that Mr. Gladstone would repeat next Session the speech which he delivered on Mr. Miall's motion; and whatever hope any may have that he will yet see his way to a measure of disestablishment, rests solely on our faith in the converting power of events that are occurring within the Church itself.

The Primate is pursuing a line of policy into which a man weighted with responsibilities and duties beyond his true strength is very apt to drift, but which may yet be fraught with serious mischief to the Church to which he is loyally devoted. The Ritualists are gaining more by his indirect concessions than he could possibly secure if he were to win them to obedience. With the Primate's views of their position, there is really but one course for him to take. He believes the Ritualists to be ecclesiastical rebels, and it is his manifest duty to enforce on them obedience to the law because it is law. Instead of that, his chief anxiety apparently is to satisfy them that the Church, if it does not enjoin, at least permits them, to do the particular things commanded by the Court acting in the name of the State. Now, all this may seem very wise when it succeeds, as it did in the case of Mr. Ridsdale, but the success even in his case is only apparent. It is true that Mr. Ridsdale has given up his vestments, but that was a very small point as compared with a recognition of the authority of the law and submission to it. This the Folkestone Vicar has evaded, and is able to plead that his diocesan, the Primate of all England, has not only sanctioned the evasion, but has made himself a party to it. In the case of Mr. Tooth, it is worse, for he has refused to be argued into submission. The Primate employed the venerable name of Convocation to convince him, and he has refused to be convinced. The result is that he remains master of the field. It is easy to say that he is inconsistent, unreasonable, impracticable, and possibly he is. But it is the misfortune of the Archbishop that he has attempted to argue when he ought simply to have insisted on obedience to the law, to which—as he very pertinently and properly sets before his correspondent—bishop and parson owe their status as clergymen of a National Church. What Convocation said on the point was altogether irrelevant, except as furnishing an opportunity for a smart hit at a weak man who held a position altogether untenable.

If the Primate had attained his object he would still have left Mr. Tooth victorious, for he would have been able to assert that his diocesan had yielded all for which he had ever contended, and that he himself had bowed, not to Lord Penzance and his hated Court, but to that Convocation whose right the Archbishop had acknowledged by appealing to its resolutions. We are unable to understand the interest which some seem to take in the controversy, and the exultation with which they point to the Primate's victory over his rebellious subordinate. No doubt the Primate seems to be on the side of English Protestantism, while Mr. Tooth belongs to an unpopular party, and it is surprising how much injustice can be done under such circumstances. Alas, and alas, for 'our poor human nature ! When a man has few friends, there are plenty to kick him. But for this unhappy tendency, it would be seen that Mr. Tooth, albeit contending for a cause we detest, and not having much to attract sympathy in any personal qualities of his own, has quite as strong a position as that of his diocesan.

It may be truly said that the Primate has a very difficult game to play. But its difficulties are increased a hundredfold by any reliance upon a mere finesse. Finesse is in itself a sign of weakness, and the Primate's is a position where to be weak is to be miserable, and, what is more, to court certain failure. The Ritualists understand what it all means, and it encourages them to persevere. The Rev. John Oakley, in his able sermon on the Tooth case, based all his argument on the suggestive verse in the Acts, which he applied with great effect—"Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." If the Archbishop had wished to give a practical confirmation of this application of the words, he could hardly have done it more effectually. That the Ritualists will put this and no other interpretation on his conduct cannot be doubted. They will not believe that he cares for the decrees of Convocation, or that he really supposes that he has any dispensing power. They will not suppose that he has abated one of his Erastian ideas because he has lent himself to their hierarchical pretensions. They will not even give him credit for a fatherly desire to recover them from the error of their way. They will very naturally regard his conduct as a proof that they are right in supposing themselves indispensable to the Establishment, and their audacity will be more confident than ever. Such a result will certainly not be gratifying to the country, which is only anxious to get rid of these priests. The extent to which the feeling has gone, and the injurious bias it is communicating to some who might have been expected to keep their heads, is evident from an utterance of the radical *Examiner*, which we find in the *Rock*, naturally desirous to give it prominence. The *Examiner*

suggests that if the "consecration" of the Bishops was abolished, there would be an end to the evil, for all High Churchmen would secede. The proposal is simply that of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which we have discussed elsewhere, and is utterly impracticable. What is suprising is to find the *Examiner* taking it up, and saying, "We do not disguise from ourselves that this measure is a Conservative one. If carried, it will probably postpone Disestablishment for fifty years, or even indefinitely." As to the Conservatism of the measure we have nothing to say; but it is as unjust as it is impossible. Verily some, even among advanced Liberals, have to learn what are the first principles of religious equality. But the point to which we call attention is the evidence here given that the Primate has misread the feelings of the people. He thinks it wise to try and retain even these extreme men. The desire of the nation to get rid of them is so strong that here is a Radical journal proposing to cast aside the idea of comprehensiveness, and to narrow the Church into an Evangelical Protestant Episcopacy, in order to secure this end. As a question of security for the Establishment for the present the Primate may be right, but he is sacrificing everything to keep peace in his days. When the significance of his proceedings is understood, he will find that the condemnation of all who look beyond the hour will be decided and emphatic.



BOOKS ON THE TABLE.

MISS MARTINEAU'S *Autobiography** was written many years ago, and was printed under her own superintendence long before her death. It closes in 1855. At that time she thought that the heart disease from which she was suffering was likely to end in death within a few months, and she resolved that she would tell the story of her life in her own way.

The story is a very remarkable one, and is told with characteristic directness and vigour. Miss Martineau is remorselessly severe—she would have said herself that she was steadily just—to herself, and to everyone of whom she has occasion to write. She spares no one—neither her mother nor her brothers, neither her enemies nor her friends. The success of her political economy stories opened to her the literary and political society of London, and she sketches with a firm hand a large number of men and women who were famous forty years ago. The sketches are very entertaining, and if read with

* *Harriet Martineau's Biography*, with Memorials. By MARIA WESTON CHAPMAN. Three volumes. London: Smith, Elder & Co. (Price £1 12s.)

adequate allowance for the temperament of the artist, give a very fair idea of the originals.

Almost enough, perhaps, has been said of the less lovely aspects of Miss Martineau's character as disclosed in this book. It is clear that whatever her faults—and she had grave faults—she was a woman not only of great intellectual force, but of great moral qualities. Her industry, her courage, her complete sincerity, were very noble.

Our readers will have seen so many general reviews of the book, that we think we may dismiss everything except the story of her religious life. This is singularly pathetic. She tells us that when she was a child of about seven or eight years of age, she began to *take moral and spiritual charge* of herself. This was through the influence of another child about seven years older than herself, the daughter of a Unitarian minister at Newcastle. Poor little soul! She was not old enough to take charge of her intellectual education, or of her physical health, or even of her clothes, and yet she took charge of her own moral and spiritual life! The weight of this burden was aggravated by many additional misfortunes. She was in ill-health; she found it difficult to believe that anyone loved her; there was little warmth and sunlight in her home; and yet, poor child, she had this terrible burden to bear all by herself—the burden of being in her own moral and spiritual charge.

She resolved that she would leave off crying, which was one of her childish failings; but her resolution seems to have had little effect. She says, "I was a persevering child, and I know I tried hard; but I failed. I gave up at last; and during all these years (from eight to fourteen), I never *did* pass a day without crying." She says of herself that her temper and habit of mind must have been excessively bad, that she has no doubt she was an insufferable child for gloom, obstinacy, and crossness; but to us it seems that all her faults must have been made worse by this terrible responsibility which was always upon her—the moral and spiritual charge of herself.

"I did try hard to improve," she says in another place; "but I fear I made little progress. Every night I reviewed the thoughts and actions of the day, and tried to repent; but I could seldom comfort myself about any amendment." What a story of a child's life!

"The doctrine of forgiveness and repentance," she tells us, "did not avail me much, because forgiveness for the past was nothing without safety in the future; and my sins were not curable, I felt, by any single remission of their consequences—if such remission were possible. If I prayed and wept, and might hope that I was pardoned at night, it was small comfort, because I knew I should be in a state of remorse again before the next noon." We say again, how pathetic and heart-breaking the story is!

And yet Harriet Martineau was not educated among orthodox people, who are often said to make God so terrible that it is impossible for a child to love and trust Him. She was born and trained among those who are called liberal Christians. Her parents were Unitarians; the child-friend who first got her to take moral and spiritual charge of herself was the daughter of a Unitarian minister. She attended Unitarian worship. She believed, she says, in a God milder and more beneficent and passionless than the God of the orthodox. She thinks that she never believed in the devil. Nor did she believe that God would doom any of His creatures to eternal torment. We orthodox people, therefore, are not responsible for this poor child's miseries. Nor do we say that her Unitarian friends were responsible. But it is worth while to notice that Unitarian teaching did not save her from her suffering.

When she was twenty the burden was still on her heart, though it was somewhat lightened, because she thought she had come to believe in the doctrine of necessity. She still clung to a certain kind of Christian belief; but she also believed that the human will is not free, and this gave her some rest from the terrible pressure of responsibility. As yet, however, the pressure was not gone.

From her faith in God she had no relief. When she was twenty she still maintained what she supposed was the habit of prayer; but she prayed for spiritual benefits only, and it is clear that she had no thought that God could help her. She says that she believed that prayer "brought about, or might bring about, its own accomplishment by the spiritual dispositions which it excited and cherished." The burden was on her shoulders at twenty, just as it was when she was eight.

And yet she supposed she believed in a God "milder and more beneficent and passionless than the God of the orthodox." More passionless—yes—for we believe that God looks upon us with such a passion of pity and love that He stretches out His hand to help us, takes charge of us, instead of leaving us to take charge of ourselves; really answers our prayers for light and strength, instead of looking on and doing nothing, while our prayers contribute to their own accomplishment by exciting and cherishing spiritual dispositions. But to describe this passionless God as milder and more beneficent than ours, however the description may be justified by Harriet Martineau's reference to the doctrine of eternal torment, which many of the "orthodox" do not believe, shows that she had never caught the faintest glimpse of the infinite and energetic love of the God revealed to us through Christ—the God who stands by us and sustains us in all our troubles, puts His strength into alliance with our weakness, and rejoices with great joy when through Him we are able to overcome evil.

And now let us pass on twenty or thirty years later.

When she was forty-nine she published a book, the appearance of which, as we well remember, created an immense sensation, and shocked multitudes of those who had admired her remarkable power, and the earnestness with which she had advocated great reforms. Of the book itself we have only the faintest remembrance ; it appeared about 1851, twenty-six years ago, and we have not seen it since. The impression we have of it is that the letters of her friend, Mr. Atkinson, which formed the greater part of the volume, were very dreary, and this impression is confirmed by the letters from the same gentleman which appear in the Autobiography.

The principal conclusions to which she had come by that time were— (1) That there is no reason at all to believe that there is any personal life beyond death, and that when we die, so far as we know, there will be an end of us ; (2) That we know nothing of the cause of the Universe, that is, nothing of God ; and (3) That our knowledge cannot extend beyond the *phenomena* of the Universe, and the laws of these phenomena.

Then she came, as she says, to experience the new joy of feeling herself to be “ a portion of the Universe, resting on the security of its everlasting laws.” God was out of sight, she could not know anything of Him. Death was the limit of all her thoughts about herself, and the expectation of a life beyond death was a mere dream. She was part of the Universe, like the stars, and the trees, and the flowers, and now she was at peace. She says that she and her friend agreed that “ not for the Universe would we again have the care of our souls upon our hands.” And her last position seems to us a very natural working out of all that went before. What was the use of a faith in God, which when she was a child left her in the charge of her own moral and spiritual life ; and which, when she was twenty, led her to suppose that even when she prayed for spiritual benefits God did not hear, or if He heard, lifted no finger to help her ?

She had no true God even in her early womanhood ; none even in her childhood. The burden she had to bear was too heavy ; she had no God on whom to cast it ; she lost the burden, not by rising to the blessed knowledge that God was infinitely more than she had ever hoped, but by accepting a theory which removed from her life the crown of moral freedom and spiritual dignity, and by becoming, as she thought, nothing more than a necessary result of the everlasting laws of the Universe. A true Christian faith would have given her an earlier freedom and in a nobler way, by teaching her to put herself in God's charge, and to rely on His teaching, His strong support, and His constant care.

The Epistle of St. Clement, published in the time of Charles I., from the Alexandrian MS., now in the British Museum, is one of the most interesting and valuable relics of the first age of the Christian Church. It was, therefore, with a shock of grateful surprise that theological scholars heard, a year or two ago, that a manuscript had been discovered in the library of the Most Holy Sepulchre at Constantinople, containing the Epistle in a more complete form than that in which we previously possessed it, and containing also large additions to our previous text of the so-called Second Epistle. Curiously enough, within a few months after the publication of the Constantinopolitan MS., a Syriac version of the Epistle turned up in the sale of the MSS. of an Oriental scholar who had recently died in Paris. The Syriac MS. was purchased by the Syndicate of the Cambridge University Library. Of the genuine Epistle the parts now recovered amount to about a tenth of the whole, and the new passages in the text are of very exceptional interest. Of the so-called Second Epistle, the parts now recovered amount to about two-fifths of the whole.

In an Appendix to his previous volume on St. Clement, Canon Lightfoot has now published the newly-recovered portion of the Greek text of both documents, with a translation and notes, and a Dissertation of singular value.* Our readers will be interested in the following extract from the Dissertation :—

“ The newly-recovered portion of the first or genuine Epistle of Clement consists, as I have said (p. 223), of about one-tenth of the whole. It stands immediately before the final prayer, commendation of the bearers, and benediction, which form the two brief chapters at the close of the epistle. It contains an earnest entreaty to the Corinthians to obey the injunctions contained in the letter, and to heal their unhappy schisms ; an elaborate prayer which extends over three long chapters, commencing with an invocation and ending with an intercession for rulers and governors ; and then another appeal of some length to the Corinthians, justifying the language of the letter and denouncing the sin of disobedience. The subject is not such as to admit of much historical matter ; but the gain to our knowledge notwithstanding is not inconsiderable.

“ 1. In the first place, we are enabled to understand more fully the secret of Papal domination. This letter, it must be premised, does not emanate from the bishop of Rome, but from the Church of Rome. There is every reason to believe the early tradition which points to S. Clement as its author, and yet he is not once named. The first person plural is maintained throughout, ‘ We consider,’ ‘ We have sent.’ Accordingly writers of the second century speak of it as a letter from the community, not from the individual. Thus Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, writing to the Romans about A. D. 170, refers to it as the epistle ‘ which you wrote to us by Clement ’ (Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 23)

* *S. Clement of Rome. An Appendix containing the Newly-Recovered Portions.* By J. B. LIGHTFOOT, D.D. London : Macmillan & Co. (Price 8s. 6d.)

and Irenæus soon afterwards similarly describes it: 'In the time of this Clement, no small dissension having arisen among the brethren in Corinth, the Church in Rome sent a very sufficient letter to the Corinthians urging them to peace' (iii. 3. 3). Even later than this, Clement of Alexandria calls it in one passage 'the Epistle of the Romans to the Corinthians' (*Strom.* v. 12, p. 693), though elsewhere he ascribes it to Clement. Still it might have been expected that somewhere towards the close mention would have been made (though in the third person) of the famous man who was at once the actual writer of the letter and the chief ruler of the Church in whose name it was written. Now however that we possess the work complete, we see that his existence is not once hinted at from beginning to end. The name and personality of Clement are absorbed in the Church of which he is the spokesman.

"This being so, it is the more instructive to observe the urgent and almost imperious tone which the Romans adopt in addressing their Corinthian brethren during the closing years of the first century. They exhort the offenders to submit 'not to them, but to the will of God' (§ 56). 'Receive our counsel,' they write again, 'and ye shall have no occasion of regret' (§ 58). Then shortly afterwards: 'But if certain persons should be disobedient unto the words spoken by Him (*i.e.* by God) through us, let them understand that they will entangle themselves in no slight transgression and danger, but we shall be guiltless of this sin' (§ 59). At a later point again they return to the subject, and use still stronger language: 'Ye will give us great joy and gladness, if ye render obedience unto the things written by us through the Holy Spirit, and root out the unrighteous anger of your jealousy, according to the entreaty which we have made for peace and concord in this letter; and we have also sent unto you faithful and prudent men, that have walked among us from youth unto old age unblameably, who shall be witnesses between you and us. And this we have done, that ye might know that we have had and still have every solicitude, that ye may speedily be at peace' (§ 63). It may perhaps seem strange to describe this noble remonstrance as the first step towards papal aggression. And yet undoubtedly this is the case. There is all the difference in the world between the attitude of Rome towards other Churches at the close of the first century, when the Romans as a community remonstrate on terms of equality with the Corinthians on their irregularities, strong only in the righteousness of their cause, and feeling, as they had a right to feel, that these counsels of peace were the dictation of the Holy Spirit, and its attitude at the close of the second century, when Victor the bishop excommunicates the Churches of Asia Minor for clinging to the usage in regard to the celebration of Easter which had been handed down to them from the Apostles, and thus foments instead of healing dissensions (*Euseb. H. E.* v. 23, 24). Even this second stage has carried the power of Rome only a very small step in advance towards the pretensions of a Hildebrand or an Innocent or a Boniface, or even of a Leo; but it is nevertheless a decided step. The substitution of the bishop of Rome for the Church of Rome is an all-important point. The later Roman theory supposes that the Church of Rome derives all its authority from the bishop of Rome, as the successor of S. Peter. History inverts this relation and shows that, as a matter of fact, the power of the bishop of Rome was built upon the power of the Church of Rome. It was originally a primacy, not of

the Episcopate, but of the Church. The position of the Roman Church, which this newly-recovered ending of Clement's Epistle throws out in such strong relief, accords entirely with the notices in other early documents. A very few years later—from ten to twenty—Ignatius writes to Rome. He is a staunch advocate of episcopacy. Of his six remaining letters, one is addressed to a bishop as bishop; and the other five all enforce the duty of the Churches whom he addresses to their respective bishops. Yet in the letter to the Church of Rome there is not the faintest allusion to the episcopal office from first to last. He entreats the Roman Christians not to intercede and thus by obtaining a pardon or commutation of sentence to rob him of the crown of martyrdom. In the course of his entreaty he uses words which doubtless refer in part to Clement's Epistle, and which the newly-recovered ending enables us to appreciate more fully: 'Ye never yet,' he writes, 'envied any one,' *i.e.* grudged him the glory of a consistent course of endurance and self-sacrifice, 'ye were the teachers of others' (οὐδέποτε ἐβασκάνατε οὐδενὶ ἄλλου ἐδιδάσκατε, § 3). They would therefore be inconsistent with their former selves, he implies, if in his own case they departed from those counsels of self-renunciation and patience which they had urged so strongly on the Corinthians and others. But, though Clement's letter is apparently in his mind, there is no mention of Clement or Clement's successor throughout. Yet at the same time he assigns a primacy to Rome. The Church is addressed in the opening salutation as 'she who hath the presidency (προκαθήμεναι) in the place of the region of the Romans.' But immediately afterwards the nature of this supremacy is defined. The presidency of this Church is declared to be a presidency of love (προκαθήμενη τῆς ἀγάπης). This then was the original primacy of Rome—a primacy not of the bishop but of the whole Church, a primacy not of official authority but of practical goodness, backed however by the prestige and the advantages which were necessarily enjoyed by the Church of the metropolis. The reserve of Clement in his epistle harmonises also with the very modest estimate of his dignity implied in the language of one who appears to have been a younger contemporary, but who wrote (if tradition can be trusted) at a somewhat later date."

There is also important doctrinal matter in relation to the Trinity, in the new additions to the text.

Canon Lightfoot has, in this volume, created new titles to the gratitude of all who are interested in the faith and history of the Early Church.

The insulting and reckless notice of Mr. Reed's *Story of Christianity*,* which appeared a few weeks ago in the *Saturday Review*, will do it no harm. The book would make a capital text-book for a class of young people, the teacher illustrating each lesson by the assistance of larger histories. The engraving which forms the title was a mistake, and may with advantage be omitted in copies not yet put up.

**The Story of Christianity from the Apostles to the Reformation.* By ANDREW REED, B.A. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co. (Price 5s.)

We have received two Lives of Mr. P. P. Bliss, the writer of the music to "Hold the Fort," "I am so glad that Jesus loves me," "Only an Armour-Bearer," "More to Follow," and of many other of the popular religious melodies which Mr. Sankey made familiar to the English people. One of these lives,* edited by Major Whittle and Rev. W. Guest, is described on the title-page as "published in the interest of the family, by arrangement with Major Whittle, guardian to the orphan children;" the other† contains no such statement, but a yellow bill is enclosed in it, inviting *subscriptions* to "The Bliss Memoir Fund," and stating that the profits from the sale of "the American edition" of the memoirs are to be devoted to Mr. Bliss's family. Mr. Guest in preparing the first of these Lives has freely used the American book by his co-editor Major Whittle; but informs us that he has re-written most of it, has re-arranged the materials, and supplied links that were necessary in the original narrative. Mr. Longley, in preparing the second of these lives, has simply excluded such portions as he thought likely to be uninteresting to the English reader. The books are, of course, very much alike, and each of them tells a story that has considerable picturesqueness, and great moral and religious beauty.



MR. MCALL'S WORK IN PARIS.—In addition to the contributions, amounting to £23, acknowledged in the June number of the CONGREGATIONALIST, the Editor has the pleasure of acknowledging the following :—

				£	s.	d.
Previously acknowledged	23	0	0
William Keiller, Esq.	5	0	0
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Misses Challinor	2	0	0
Per Mr. Moillet (from Juvenile Missionary Association, St. Leonard's)...	0	5	0
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* *P. P. Bliss: His Life and Work.* Edited by Major WHITTLE and Rev. W. GUEST. Introduction by D. L. MOODY. London: Morgan & Scott. (Price 2s. 6d. Cheaper Edition, 1s.)

† *Memoir of Philip P. Bliss.* Edited by D. W. WHITTLE. Introduction by D. L. MOODY. London: F. E. Longley. (Price 2s. 6d. Cheaper Edition, 1s.)

The Congregationalist.

SEPTEMBER, 1877.

CHARLES WESLEY.

INTENSE feeling, however inspired, and whithersoever directed leads to poetic utterance. The lover, the mourner, the patriot, the aspirant, the believer, yearns for adequate expression of the affection or conviction which possesses him—that is, for a full, rich, melodious expression. If endowed with the requisite gifts, he makes such utterance; if unendowed therewith, he seeks it elsewhere. The melted or kindled soul sings. When the affection or conviction is general and contagious, when it lays hold on a multitude, when it possesses a people, when it falls upon a Church, it almost always breaks forth into singing, gives birth to a multitude of strains. Patriotism in its intense moods waxes vocal and melodious. The prolonged struggle of a nation for existence or independence is often cheered and encouraged by song. What a large crop of warlike and national songs was yielded by the conflict of Great Britain with Napoleon I.!

The high tides of religion are also the high tides of divine song. Ordinary times do not lack sacred poets; but it is only a great outburst of spiritual life that calls forth a great outburst of spiritual song. Almost every religious revival has been attended by a large company of hymns. Upon mediæval Christianity, even when visited with something like a revival, the spirit of song never fell, by reason of the dead Latin in which its worship was offered. The Latin hymns were the productions of musing monks and solitary souls—did not break forth at once, and form one broad, full stream of sacred song, but were so many lonely lakelets, lying here and there.

Not till the Reformation did a mighty river of Christian song flow forth. Accustomed to regard the Reformation as the denial of religious

falsehoods, as the overthrow of spiritual corruptions, we are in danger of overlooking its chief glory; we are apt to forget that it was the greatest of all religious revivals. It was, in very truth, the drawing nigh of Christendom to God, the shining of the Divine light into its inmost heart, the descent of the Holy Spirit into its spirit.

“ On, soaring Christendom, enjoy thy flight !
 Bathe in the happy morning light !
 With tender ecstasy prolong
 The sweetness of thy morning song !
 Again explore
 With thine own wings the boundless realm of grace !
 Once more, once more
 Meet thine own heavenly Lover face to face !
 Once more rejoice
 To hear the very tones of His own gracious voice !
 Again, again
 Thyself the dear Redeemer entertain :
 Back, Pontiff ! His sweet smile no longer dim,
 No more thy darkness thrust between His own and Him !
 On, glad souls ! all your Saviour’s sweetness try,
 Yes, full upon that tender bosom lie
 In the meek rapture of your new-won liberty ! ”

No wonder that the new-born love, the new-born joy, waxed vocal and melodious, that enfranchised, exulting Christendom broke forth into singing. No wonder that Germany, the birthplace of the Reformation, was flooded with a river of sacred song. Potent hymns flowed forth from the full heart of Luther; countless sacred singers followed in his train. Thousands of glad songs greeted the new birth of faith and love, and remain the only beautiful and noble German utterance bequeathed by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Not thus, however, did the Reformation work upon England. It quickened English intellect, it heightened English energy, it helped English freedom, it advanced and uplifted England and Scotland in many ways; but it did not pour upon Britain the spirit of sacred song. The large part taken by the State in the English Reformation, the systematic form of theology which prevailed in Scotland, may have had something to do with this. However we may account for the fact, no retinue of gladsome hymns greeted the advent or attended the earlier life of English Protestantism. The Psalms found translators—Sternhold and Hopkins, Sir Philip Sidney and his sister, Sandys and Wither. There was no lack of sacred poets: meditative souls, such as Giles Fletcher and Sir John Davies, Francis Quarles and John Quarles, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Henry Vaughan, lent splendid, subtle, and melodious utterance to the great truths of Christianity and their own spiritual experience. But no great hymn-writer arose during the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ; no large company of hymns enriched the language and gladdened the heart of England. It was reserved for the eighteenth century, a period so generally regarded as shallow, heedless, light-minded, and unbelieving, to witness the first outburst and the unbroken succession of English sacred song.

At the threshold of that century the spirit of song fell upon English Puritanism : a great hymn-writer arose in Isaac Watts. This precedency in sacred song ranks not least among the many glories of English Puritanism ; its championship of the good old cause, its devotion to political freedom, its protests and struggles against wrong in high places, its magnificent contribution to the spiritual depth and power, to the moral earnestness and veracity of the nation. Watts is not unworthy to have come after Milton and Cromwell ; he is fully worthy to keep company with Owen, Bunyan, and Baxter. From the heart of Puritanism, so perpetually identified with precision of doctrines, with rigidity of morals and of manners, burst forth that stream of sacred song which has ever since kept flowing on, gladdening and beautifying the spiritual life of England. Its deep and lofty tones rang through the hymns of Watts, and blended a solemn majesty with the width and variety of his utterances. No other hymn-writer, English or foreign, has traversed so wide a range of subjects ; by none have the glory and greatness of God been so magnificently sung, has the human heart been so deeply searched, have its spiritual struggles and aspirations, defeats and victories, been so worthily set forth. But Watts was not the poet of a religious revival. Puritanism had wrought mightily upon Church and State, upon national and individual life, ere it inspired his hymns ; had produced Cromwell, Owen, and Bunyan, ere it produced Watts. His strains, while full of fervour, yet lack that intense and sustained glow characteristic of hymns born of a revival, while they deal with a variety of themes from which such hymns shrink. On the whole, Watts was a greater, more various, more abiding, and more helpful sacred singer for not being the poet of a revival.

The eighteenth century, however, was to witness a great revival of religion in England, and that revival was to inspire a great sacred poet. Accustomed as we are to associate that century with the decay of faith everywhere, and with the triumph of unbelief in more than one region,—with the fall of the Roman Catholic Church in France before philosophy and revolution, with the relaxation of Protestant theology all over the Continent, with the prevalence of latitudinarianism in the Church of England, and with the subsidence of the English Presbyterians into Unitarians,—we can hardly contemplate it as the period of a great outburst of religious faith and zeal in England, as the birth-time of popular sacred song among us. We can hardly conceive of Voltaire and

Priestley as the contemporaries of Swedenborg and Wesley. But so it was. Amidst that high-tide of all-embracing doubt, bold inquiry, and daring speculation, religious feeling obtained a supremacy never achieved before. While English poetry was being cramped and stiffened into its utmost rigidity and formality, there gushed forth a lively, rapid, vehement, overflowing stream of sacred song, such as Christendom before or since has never yielded.

Protestantism was an revolt against falsehood as well as deadness in religion. Methodism was a revolt against religious deadness alone, a pure, unmingled spiritual *revival*. It exalted undisputed doctrines into living and potent realities. It restored and diffused religious life, spread over the land the enlivened sense of justifying faith and forgiving love. That enlivened sense won a corresponding utterance in the hymns of Charles Wesley. As the great religious revival of the last century found a consummate leader and organiser in John Wesley, so it found its appropriate poet in his brother Charles.

The fire of that remarkable revival lives and glows in the Wesleyan hymns, constitutes their glorious peculiarity, distinguishes them from all other sacred songs. Charles Wesley was a ready, fluent, and copious versifier. He had an ample command of pure, strong, simple English. He combined many poetical gifts with an eager disposition to exercise them. His range of subjects was not limited. All sorts of occasions urged him into rhyme—the needs and impulses of the soul, public and private occurrences, the outward and inward events of his own life, the sorrows and joys of his friends, the historical narrative and moral lessons of the Bible. He produced pointed verses and flowing odes, elegies and epigrams, polemical poetry and domestic poetry. But in none of these spheres is he supreme, over none of these realms does he reign. As a general hymn-writer, as the utterer of the daily needs and states of the soul, he seems to me inferior to Watts. It is as the utterer of her special needs and special states, of her highest flights and topmost heights—in other words, as the poet of a revival—that he stands alone. The longing for full forgiveness and full sanctification, the joy of conversion, the rapture of assurance, the marvels of all-withstanding, all-subduing, all-accomplishing faith, its victory over the world and the grave, the triumph and the transport of the soul, have never been so sung as by Charles Wesley.

The manner of his singing is in most happy accordance with his matter. He hastes along, he climbs, he pants, he glows. Exhortation is heaped upon exhortation; exclamation jostles exclamation; epithet is piled upon epithet; aspiration presses upon aspiration. His hymns dash on like so many torrents, rushing, roaring, foaming, flashing. Among so great a multitude of sacred torrents, it is hard to fix upon one

of special liveliness and vehemence. Everyone familiar with Charles Wesley's hymns could at once pour forth illustrations of his peculiar manner. As a sample of accumulated exclamations and piled-up epithets, one of his best-known strains at once offers itself:—

“Oh for a heart to praise my God!
 A heart from sin set free;
 A heart that always feels the blood
 So freely spilt for me!
 A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
 My great Redeemer's throne;
 Where Christ is only heard to speak,
 Where Jesus reigns alone!
 A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
 Believing, true, and clean,
 Which neither life nor death can part
 From Him that dwells within!
 A heart in every thought renewed,
 And filled with love divine;
 Perfect and right, and pure and good,
 A copy, Lord, of Thine!”

Another famous hymn forms a glorious bundle of closely-packed aspirations:—

“Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go,
 My daily labour to pursue;
 Thee, only Thee, resolved to know
 In all I think, or speak, or do.
 The tasks Thy wisdom has assigned
 Oh let me cheerfully fulfil;
 In all my works Thy presence find,
 And prove Thine acceptable will!
 Thee may I set at my right hand,
 Whose eyes my inmost substance see;
 And labour on at Thy command,
 And offer all my work to Thee.
 Give me to bear Thy easy yoke,
 And every moment watch and pray,
 And still to things eternal look,
 And hasten to Thy glorious day;
 For Thee delightfully employ
 Whate'er Thy bounteous grace hath given,
 And run my course with even joy,
 And closely walk with Thee to heaven.”

Fervent piety and glowing poetry have sunk into such commonplace phrases, that one almost shrinks from employing them in connection with Charles Wesley. His soul in very truth did burn. His songs

indeed do glow. The fire of his heart so fully passed into so many strains, that it is difficult to select one of surpassing fervency. Perhaps his ardent spirit never more intensely, daringly, and rapturously expressed itself than in this longing for entire salvation and sanctification:

"O joyful sound of Gospel grace!
Christ shall in me appear;
I, even I, shall see His face,
I shall be holy here!

This heart shall be His constant home;
I hear His Spirit's cry:
'Surely, He saith, I quickly come:'
He saith, who cannot lie.
The glorious crown of righteousness
To me reached out I view;
Conqueror through faith, I soon shall seize
And wear it as my due.

The promised land from Pisgah's top
I now exult to see;
My hope is full (O glorious hope!)
Of immortality.

He visits now the house of clay;
He shakes His future home;
Oh wouldst Thou, Lord, on this glad day
Into Thy temple come!

With me I know, I feel Thou art;
But this cannot suffice,
Unless Thou plantest in my heart
A constant paradise.

My earth Thou waterest from on high;
But make it all a pool:
Spring up, O Well! I ever cry,
Spring up within my soul!

* * * * *

Fulfil, fulfil my vast desires,
Large as infinity;
Give, give me all my soul requires,
All, all that is in Thee!"

In this hymn the solitary soul aspires. In the following invitation the rapture is heightened by being shared; the sweetness of human fellowship is marvellously mingled with the loftiness of Divine communion:—

"Come let us ascend, my companion and friend,
To a taste of the banquet above;
If thy heart be as mine, if for Jesus it pine,
Come up into the chariot of love!

Who in Jesus confide, we are bold to outide
 The storms of affliction beneath;
 With the prophet we soar to the heavenly shore,
 And outfly all the arrows of death.

By faith we are come to our permanent home,
 By hope we the rapture improve,
 By love we still rise, and look down on the skies;
 For the heaven of heavens is love.

Who on earth can conceive how happy we live
 In the palace of God the great King;
 What a concert of praise when our Jesus's grace
 The whole heavenly company sing!

What a rapturous song when the glorified throng
 In the spirit of harmony join!
 Join all the glad choirs, hearts, voices, and lyres,
 And the burden is 'Mercy Divine!'

Hallelujah, they cry, to the King of the sky,
 To the great everlasting I Am,
 To the Lamb that was slain and liveth again,
 Hallelujah to God and the Lamb!

The Lamb on the throne, He dwells with His own,
 And to rivers of pleasure He leads;
 With His mercy's full blaze, with the sight of His face,
 Our beatified spirits He feeds.

Our foreheads proclaim His ineffable name,
 Our bodies His glory display,
 A day without night we feast in His sight,
 And eternity seems but a day!"

In verses 4, 5, and 7 the strength of the expression hardly comes up to the glow of the feelings. But still, what an amazing and magnificent outburst is this! How wonderfully does the rush of the verse correspond with the rapture of the thought! Sacred song knows no braver burst, no more astonishing transcendency than that second couplet of verse 3:—

"By love we still rise, and look down on the skies;
 For the heaven of heavens is love."

Hardly less strong is the rapture of another burst of aspiration for the full possession of God, beginning

"My God, I know, I feel Thee mine,"

which is too long, and too like one of the strains already quoted, to be more than alluded to.

The complete victory won by the early Christian over the dread and dolour of death, the celebration of the death-day as the true birth-day of their friends, was repeated in the early Methodists. Theirs, in truth,

was an overcoming faith, triumphant over the world, triumphant over the grave. The latter triumph was meetly sung by Charles Wesley—still lives in many a sweet and sublime strain. The best known of these songs of triumph seems to me the best :—

“ Happy soul ! thy days are ended,
All thy mourning days below ;
Go, by angel guards attended,
To the sight of Jesus go !

Waiting to receive thy spirit,
Lo ! the Saviour stands above,
Shows the purchase of His merit,
Reaches out the crown of love.

Struggle through thy latest passion
To thy dear Redeemer's breast ;
To His uttermost salvation,
To His everlasting rest ;

For the joy He sets before thee
Bear a momentary pain ;
Die, to live the life of glory ;
Suffer, with thy Lord to reign.”

I am inclined to pronounce this hymn the most perfect of all Charles Wesley's strains. It is most striking, without being in the least exaggerated. It yields the sweetest and most stately example of his peculiar mannerism, his accumulative urgency of exhortation and intensified variety of repetition.

If Charles Wesley has best sung the heavenly birthday, he has also most rejoicingly celebrated the earthly birthday. It is not quite certain whether the noble strain which I am about to quote was meant for himself or for his brother, but it is quite certain that never did human life win so exulting a retrospect, never was the gift of being so thankfully and triumphantly acknowledged :—

“ Away with my fears !
The glad morning appears
When an heir of salvation was born ;
From Jehovah I came,
For His glory I aim,
And to Him I will singing return.

* * * * *

Thee, Jesus, alone,
The fountain I own
Of my life and felicity here ;
And cheerfully sing
My Redeemer and King
Till His sign in the heavens appear.”

* * * * *

I sing of Thy grace
 From my earliest days,
 Ever near to allure and defend ;
 Hitherto Thou hast been
 My preserver from sin,
 And I know Thou wilt save to the end.

Oh the infinite cares,
 And temptations, and snares
 Thy hand has conducted me through !
 Oh the blessings bestowed
 By a bountiful God,
 And the mercies eternally new !

What a mercy is this !
 What a heaven of bliss !
 How unspeakably happy am I !
 Gathered into the fold,
 With Thy people enrolled,
 With Thy people to live and to die !

* * * * *

Oh the fathomless love
 That has deigned to approve
 And prosper the work of my hands !
 With my pastoral crook
 I went over the brook,
 And behold I am spread into bands.

Who, I ask in amaze,
 Hath begotten me these,
 And inquire from what quarter they came ?
 My full heart replies,
 ' They are born from the skies,
 And give glory to God and the Lamb.'

All honour and praise
 To the Father of grace,
 To the Spirit and Son, I return ;
 The business pursue
 He hath made me to do,
 And rejoice that I ever was born.

In a rapture of joy,
 My life I employ
 The God of my life to proclaim ;
 'Tis worth living for, this,
 To administer bliss
 And salvation in Jesus's name.

My remnant of days
 I spend in His praise,
 Who died the whole world to redeem ;
 Fe they many or few,
 My days are his due,
 And they all are devoted to Him."

Multitudes of men have joyfully remembered their birthday, have thankfully acknowledged the blessings of life. But whose remembrance has ever come up to the overflowing joy of Charles Wesley's? Whose acknowledgment has not fallen below the liveliness of his gratitude? Poets have poured forth their hearts in glad birthday songs, have bestowed a melodious retrospect upon life. In the familiar strain beginning

"When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,"

Addison has bequeathed a review of life perhaps more poetical, and certainly not less devout and intense, if somewhat more calm, than this of Charles Wesley; more suited, too, for general repetition, not only from the greater sobriety of its tone, but from the more general nature of its topics. Charles Wesley's is emphatically the birthday ode of a Christian minister. I reckon it not the least glory of Christianity that its especial work and service should have inspired this wonderful burst of joy, should have mingled such transcendent gladness with the retrospect of human life.

This amazing heat of soul does not only boil and bubble over in personal poems, in hymns of spiritual experience; it overflows into the strains drawn forth by outward events, either of his own time or of early Christian history. The lively, ringing cheer of his Christmas carol—

"Hark! the herald angels sing,"

has won for it universal acceptance, has given it unrivalled pre-eminence on Christmas-Day. Easter songs are bound to be gladsome, but where shall we find the mighty, mounting gladness which fills the Easter hymn of Charles Wesley:—

" 'Christ the Lord is risen to-day!'
Sons of men and angels say:
Raise your joys and triumphs high,
Sing, ye Heavens! thou Earth, reply!

Love's redeeming work is done;
Fought the fight, the battle won;
Lo! the Sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! he sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ hath burst the gates of Hell;
Death in vain forbids His rise;
Christ hath opened Paradise.

Lives again our glorious King!
Where, O Death, is now thy sting?
Once He died our souls to save;
Where's thy victory, O grave?

Soar we now where Christ hath led,
 Following our exalted Head!
 Made like Him, like Him we rise,
 Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

* * * * *

King of Glory! Soul of Bliss!
 Everlasting life is this:
 Thee to know, Thy power to prove,
 Thus to sing, and thus to love."

Most Easter hymns conclude with an aspiration to immortality. Charles Wesley, in the fervour of assurance, ends with the appropriation of life everlasting. With him, the present heaven overpowers the future heaven.

Though pre-eminently the poet of a religious revival, Charles Wesley handled all manner of religious themes. He provided hymns for various occasions, domestic and national. He dealt in doctrinal and controversial hymns. He sought, of course not very successfully, to carve divine songs out of creeds, and to turn passages of Scripture into hymns. He fought the battle of free salvation in verse, and assailed Calvinism with what he called "Hymns on Everlasting Love." His hymn on "Universal Redemption" begins not ignobly—

"Hear, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
 Father of all mankind,
 Spirit of Love, Eternal Word,
 In mystic union joined.

Hear and inspire my stammering tongue;
 Exalt my abject thought;
 Speak from my mouth a sacred song,
 Who spak'st the world from nought."

But it soon sinks into an onslaught upon the "Horrible Decree," and into invective against the champions thereof. The hymns founded on short passages of Scripture, known to me through the copious extracts given by the Rev. Frederick Bird in his admirable selection from Charles Wesley's poems, while they contain much vigorous and ingenious verse, do not seem to me worthy to be called hymns.* The same criticism applies to his Hymns on the Trinity. The former are too directly didactic, the latter are too directly dogmatic, to bear the name of hymns—a name due to utterances of joy, sorrow, love, wonder, and aspiration, not to theological statements, to doctrinal and ethical expositions. One of the Hymns on the Trinity thus begins:—

* "Charles Wesley seen in his Finer but less Familiar Hymns:" New York, 1867. Mr. Bird has more recently and remarkably vindicated his supremacy as a hymnologist in his unrivalled collection, "Songs of the Spirit," 1871.

“ Three Persons there are
 Their record who bear,
 And Jehovah in heavenly places declare ;
 But in Father and Son
 And Spirit made known,
 The witnessing Three are essentially One.”

Another opens thus :—

“ Our Heavenly Father is but One,
 With that paternity
 In which the Father and the Son
 And Holy Ghost agree.
 Each Person of the Triune God
 May His own creature claim,
 For each impressed the earthly clod
 With His own awful name.”

The Trinity, however, not dogmatically handled but devoutly and spiritually presented, has inspired true hymns. Watts thus sings :—

“ Blest be the Father and His love,
 To whose celestial source we owe
 Rivers of endless joy above,
 And rills of comfort here below.”

“ To Him who chose us first,
 Before the world began ;
 To Him who bore the curse
 To save rebellious man ;
 To Him who formed
 Our hearts anew,
 Is endless praise
 And glory due.”

The cares of the outer life, the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears of the household, have won from Charles Wesley many true, sweet, and noble strains. Among his Family Hymns, those for a woman near her travail possess exceeding delicacy and dignity. Exquisite grace and tenderness suffuse the hymn “for the youngest.” The blessing on a family, beginning “Peace be to this habitation,” combines a most comprehensive and a truly poetical treatment. In more than one lofty and delightful strain he has uplifted the outward work of life :—

“ Son of the carpenter, receive
 This humble work of mine ;
 Worth to my meanest labour give
 By joining it to Thine.
 Servant of all, to toil for man
 Thou didst not, Lord, refuse,
 Thy majesty did not disdain
 To be employed for us.

Thy bright example I pursue,
 To Thee in all things rise,
 And all I think, or speak, or do,
 Is one great sacrifice.

Careless through outward cares I go,
 From all distraction free,
 My hands are but engaged below,
 My heart is still with Thee.

Not less admirable is a like strain, beginning—

“Lo! I come with joy to do
 The Master's blessed will,
 Him in outward works pursue,
 And serve His pleasure still.

Faithful to my Lord's commands
 I still would choose the better part,
 Serve with careful Martha's hands,
 And humble Mary's heart.”

“Wrestling Jacob,” I suppose, is generally holden to be the greatest of Charles Wesley's hymns. I acknowledge the grandeur of the inspiring thought and the transcendent power of some verses; but it is much encumbered by enfeebling repetitions. I look upon it as a noble design imperfectly and indistinctly wrought out. In

“Jesus, lover of my soul,”

I discern similar redundancy and indistinctness. With all its tenderness of feeling and sweetness of flow, this famous strain lacks the coherence and clearness of thought essential to a consummate sacred song, and so conspicuous in that perfect hymn,

“Happy soul, thy days are ended.”

That last strain combines faultlessness with the most positive excellence. If asked to name his greatest hymn, that which most happily and abundantly blends power and beauty, which exhibits in larger measure intensity of feeling, depth of thought, felicity of expression, coherence of parts, force and fulness as a whole, I should produce the following:—

“Come let us join our friends above
 That have obtained the prize,
 And on the eagle wings of love
 To joys celestial rise!

Let all the saints terrestrial sing
 With those to glory gone;
 For all the servants of our King
 In earth and heaven are one.

One family we dwell in Him;
 One Church above, beneath;
 Though now divided by the stream,
 The narrow stream of death.

THE CONGREGATIONALIST.

One army of the living God,
 To His command we bow :
 Part of His host hath crossed the flood,
 And part is crossing now.

Ten thousand to their endless home
 This solemn moment fly ;
 And we are to the margin come,
 And we expect to die.

His militant embodied host,
 With wishful looks we stand,
 And long to see that happy coast,
 And reach that heavenly land.

Our old companions in distress
 We haste again to see,
 And eager long for our release,
 And full felicity.

Even now by faith we join our hands
 With those that went before ;
 And greet the Blood-besprinkled bands
 On the eternal shore.

Our spirits too shall quickly join,
 Like theirs with glory crowned,
 And shout to see our Captain's sign,
 To hear His trumpet sound.

Oh that we now might grasp our Guide !
 Oh that the word were given !
 Come, Lord of Hosts, the waves divide,
 And land us all in heaven !”

The beauty and grandeur of this hymn cannot be overpraised. It contains the most striking and picturesque couplet in all Charles Wesley's poetry :—

“ Part of His host hath crossed the flood,
 And part is crossing now.”

The triumph of the song is exceeding great, far too great for common use, either by worshipping assemblies or devout solitary souls. To mutilate so noble a strain, to reduce its rapture, to chill its ardour, is a downright profanation : while to sing it as a whole is treason against that sincerity so essential to true worship. Too many of Charles Wesley's divine songs bear the same disqualification. They breathe forth an extravagance of rapture, true it may be to the most transient moods of the Christian soul, and to the rarest experiences of the Christian life ; but altogether out of harmony with the permanent needs and aspirations of even godly men and women. It is not edifying to hear persons, not without real worth and devoutness, but careful to extend their business and increase their fortune, assiduous shop-keepers and successful manufacturers, declare—

“ At Jesus’s call
 We give up our all ;
 And still we forego
 For Jesus’s sake our enjoyments below.

No longing we find
 For the country behind ;
 But onward we move,
 And still we are seeking a country above.”

Good and religious men anxious about their health, satisfied with their earthly lot, and desirous to live to a good old age, cannot innocently go on singing—

“ With wishful looks we stand,
 And long to see that happy coast,
 And reach that heavenly land.

Our old companions in distress
 We haste again to see ;
 And eager long for our release,
 And full felicity.”

To utter desires which we do not feel, to profess states of mind to which we are strangers, not only involves insincerity and unreality in our dealings with God, but may lead to unvaracity in our dealings with men.

These rapturous strains were untrue to the permanent feelings of Charles Wesley himself. The spur of an ardent temperament and a religious revival drove him into ecstasies which subsided with increasing years, troubles, and infirmities. In the glow of youth he longed for immortality ; in the fulness of health and strength he felt disdainful of earth and impatient for heaven. When death seemed farthest off, he passionately invoked it. In the firmest possession of life he was eager to get rid of it. Age and experience, without impairing his trust, took away his transports. That ecstatic farewell to earth on which he had so often dwelt, was not granted to him. He who in the vigour of life had sung—

“ Welcome alike the crown or cross ;
 Trouble I cannot ask, nor peace,
 Nor toil nor rest, nor gain nor loss,
 Nor joy nor grief, nor *pain nor ease*,”

as his last hour drew near earnestly besought “ *an easy death*.”* It behoves all sacred singers to resist the inspiration of mere emotion, and thus avoid the production of hymns indicative of unreality in themselves and generating unreality in others.

This extravagance of rapture, though detracting from the spiritual worth of the Wesleyan hymns, does not abate their poetical charm and

* Jackson’s Life, vol. ii. p. 442.

power. Out of the immense mass of verses composed by Charles Wesley, some of these very hymns most emphatically declare him to be a true poet. His fluency was in truth formidable: the world has never known a more copious versifier. Through a long life he kept on writing verses to the very last. According to Mr. Bird, his published poems occupy about three thousand closely printed pages, and since Mr. Bird's book came out, much of his unpublished poetry has seen the light. He dealt not only in hymns, he drew inspiration not only from crises of the soul and passages of Scripture, but from every occurrence great or small in his own life, in the lives of his kindred and friends, in the life of his country and his age. The pleasures and troubles of his own household, the birth and death of children, illnesses, recoveries and removals not only from earth to heaven, but from one earthly habitation to another, set him singing. His wife's attack of small-pox was commemorated in a style of unshrinking plainness, or (in the detestable slang now prevalent) of painful realism.* Very many friends were honoured with epitaphs of various worth. A long elegy was bestowed upon Whitefield. His brother was very often addressed in verse, now of sympathy, now of remonstrance. When someone had publicly wished John dead, Charles wished him long life in a hymn. A controversial opponent was stabbed with an epigram, or scourged with a satire. He deplored in rhyme the lapse of an active preacher into mystic Quietism. He shed tears moderately melodious over the fate of Dr. Dodd. He regretted in rhyme the rebellion of 1745; he encountered the expected invasion in 1759 with an ode; he lamented in verse the London riots of 1780. The earthquake which overthrew Lisbon in 1755 yielded him copious inspiration, had something to do with what many deem his grandest burst—

“Stand the omnipotent decree.”

The hymns of Charles Wesley declare him to be a true poet. Both the “mens diviniore,” and the “os magna sonaturum” were his in no stinted measure. Not often has so much poetic fire been accompanied by such a wealth of diction. Apart from his hymns, however, he cannot be called a great poet. His formidable fluency fairly oppressed and disabled him, smothered his fire and impaired his force. His general verses lack that distinctiveness and condensation of thought, that artistic finish essential to every permanent poem. The elegy on Whitefield, full of vigour and tenderness, is ruined by redundancy. The spirited lines on the expected invasion in 1759 suffer from the same excess and the same defect.

* Jackson, vol. ii. 36, 37.

As a hymn-writer he is very remarkable and very great. The Christian Church has never known so fervent, so copious, and so peculiar a sacred singer. A striking family likeness pervades the immense multitude of his strains. An intimate of Watts, Doddridge, or Montgomery might fail to recognise an unknown hymn of any of these writers; but no one tolerably well acquainted with Charles Wesley could mistake a hymn of his for the property of someone else. Nor is the excellence of his divine songs less signal than their number and their individuality. He occupies a very high rank among the sacred singers of England. Many admirers outside as well as inside of the Methodist body assign him the very highest place, above all other hymn-writers. I confess a preference for Watts. While allowing that the worst hymns of the Puritan poet fall below the worst hymns of the Methodist, I think that the best hymns of the former exceed the best hymns of the latter, exhibit a combination of more various excellencies. I cannot at the end of a long article draw out the grounds of my preference, but hope ere long to attempt a minute comparison and contrast of the two sweetest and greatest of English sacred singers.

THOMAS H. GILL.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

SEPTEMBER 2.—“*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*”—Hebrews x. 31.

IT is not often that we see a writer so overpowered with the solemnity of the conclusion of his own argument as to be unable to restrain the expression of his terror and awe. Yet this is the case in the text before us. It is really a sudden exclamation of fear, almost of pain, forced from the writer's mind by what he has just been saying of the terrible doom that awaits those who wilfully apostatise from Christ. And as we read his words we hardly wonder at his emotion. The whole passage is black with judgment and woe. Not a single ray of hope lights up the awful darkness that surrounds the final state of those who have deliberately abandoned Christ. They are lost beyond all

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition: these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

hope of redemption, and there is nothing for them to look forward to but "judgment and fiery indignation" that shall devour them as the flames consume the stubble. The prospect is as "certain" as it is "fearful."

And yet, terrible as these words are, there is really nothing in them to shock or to offend the reason. For consider what is the actual moral condition of those who are thus referred to here. It is not that of men who have lived and died in entire ignorance of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the great salvation proclaimed through Him to mankind. These do not even come within sight of these verses. Nor is it of those who have heard of the Gospel of Christ and have received pardon and justification in Him, but who nevertheless lapse into acts of wilful sin, that the writer is here speaking. It is not even the sin, grave as it is, of those who have heard of Christ's offer of mercy and have rejected it that is declared to be without hope of forgiveness. It is a sin that goes deeper and further than this, for it is the sin of men who have once been saved by Christ, who have "received the knowledge of the truth," and have therefore had personal assurance of the power of Christ to save, and who, notwithstanding, have deliberately renounced Christ as their Saviour, and have refused any longer to obey His authority or to trust in His love. The final apostasy of those who had been true disciples of Christ is the crime that is here pronounced to be beyond the reach of the mercy of God. If it be said that so extreme a case is hardly conceivable, it is enough to reply that if it be conceivable at all—and it is impossible to maintain that it is not—the solemnity of the warning against it is more than justified. But whether conceivable or not does not affect the truth of the writer's words. What he says is this: that should such a case occur—he begins his statement of it with an "if" (v. 26)—it is hopeless. It must be. For the very essence of the sin lies here, that after enjoyment of the mercy of God the soul has abandoned God and wilfully closed and locked the doors of mercy against itself. It has put itself, not in a moment of sudden temptation, not in ignorance of what it was doing, but in full view of all the consequences, beyond the possibility of salvation by deliberately renouncing Christ. It had been "better for that man that he had never been born." For so tremendous a sin God will visit with so tremendous a punishment that it wrings from the writer's heart the terrible cry, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God."

But these words are more than a warning of the guilt and the doom of final and wilful apostasy from Christ. They are, by implication, a protest against one of the commonest and most mischievous errors of our day, the error of supposing that God will not personally punish sin. Fifty years ago whenever the punishment of sin was spoken of it was

regarded as coming from the Power and Authority of God Himself. But it is so no longer. The developments of physical science, the successive discoveries of the "reign of law" in all parts of the physical universe have at length touched theology itself; and, as the result, we have not only enthroned Law as the creator of the world, but we are now worshipping Law as its moral governor as well. When we speak, for example, of the punishment of sin, we are careful to explain that we only mean by it that sin is its own punishment, in the same way that virtue is its own reward. Now all this may be perfectly true, but if there be nothing else than the inevitable action of moral law in the punishment sin entails, then the moral significance of that punishment is gone. The moment you withdraw the penalty of sin from the will of God you withdraw it from the conscience of man as well, and deprive it of all that invests it with its moral appeal to the heart of the sinner—in fact, you deprive it of its morality altogether. Punishment not inflicted by a person is an unmeaning expression. It is the supreme moral effort that the punishment of the sinner entails on a God of infinite love and piety which gives to that punishment, when He inflicts it, all its tremendous moral significance, and secures its justification by the conscience of the sinner himself.

It may be a terrible thing to be ground to pieces by a Law, but it is a "fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God."

SEPTEMBER 9.—*"Even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."*

1 Cor. v. 7.

There are good grounds for supposing that this epistle was written at Easter, or not very far from it. If so, the allusion in the text may have been suggested to St. Paul either by the time of the year, or, more probably, by his seeing some of his fellow-countrymen leaving Ephesus—where he then was staying—to go up to Jerusalem to "eat the Passover" there.

One can almost watch the train of thought that was passing through the Apostle's mind as he followed them in imagination to Jerusalem, and saw them partaking of the Paschal Lamb of which he himself had so often eaten. How he would pity their bondage to the "beggarly elements of Judaism," and would long to tell them of the nobler and better Sacrifice that once for all had been offered up for the sin of the whole world, and in which the ancient Jewish Passover found at once its fulfilment and termination. How his own heart would turn with new thankfulness and joy to that cross in which he had found reconciliation with God. We can almost feel the thrill of exultation there is in his words, "Even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast not with the old leaven."

But even if the allusion to Christ as "our Passover" were suggested to the Apostle thus, it is by no means accidental. The resemblance between the first and original Passover in Egypt and the sufferings and death of Christ are too striking to be overlooked, even by the most superficial reader of the Bible. The position each holds, the one in the New, the other in the Old Covenant, as its inauguration by sacrifice; the strictly substitutionary character of the sacrifice in either case; the slaying of the sacrifice by the hands of the very men it was to deliver from death; the perpetuation of both in a memorial feast, the great sacramental feast of each covenant; even the time of the year and the hour of the day in which the sacrifice began to be offered;—all these form coincidences full of meaning and of expression that are too close to be explained on any theory except the familiar one, that the Jewish Passover was intended by God to be the type of the sacrifice of Christ. It was the Old Testament shadow of the cross. It was the picture given to the Jews when they were children, just as we give picture-books to our children, to lead them to understand the reality of the picture represented. Every time the Passover was celebrated at Jerusalem it was far more than a great historical memorial of the past, it was an acted prophecy of the future; it pointed forward, as well as backward, to the "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world."

It may be instructive, however, as well as interesting, to note, though necessarily very briefly, some of the points of analogy between the Jewish Passover and the sacrifice of "Christ our Passover."

First. They both profess to deliver from the peril of death. The Jew was just as much in danger of death from the "judgment" of God as the Egyptian. The same peril hung over Israel as Egypt. If left to themselves the Jews would have perished in the same night as the Egyptians. And in the same way, as we shall see in the last of the notes on the "Golden Texts" for this month, the peril of death as "the wages of sin" hangs over every sinner, and until this awful fact is realised by the conscience, the preaching of the Gospel itself will be of little effect. Men do not flee to a Saviour until they are conscious that there is some impending danger to flee from.

Then, again, in each case the way of escape from death was of God's appointment. The Jews did not discover the Passover. It was not a plan they had hit upon, after careful inquiry, as being the most likely to secure their own safety. It was a plan communicated to them by God, and all they had to do was to avail themselves of it. In the same way the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not a scheme we have invented for the saving of our souls; it is a revelation of God's way of salvation, not a discovery of our own. And just as the Jew was not at liberty to alter or to try to improve the method of escape God had

provided for him, so the Gospel is not given to us for us to alter at our will. It is very tolerant of all fair and honest criticism, it invites the fullest activity of the reason to be engaged about it, but it never conceals from us the fact that it demands our unconditional acceptance of itself as the divine remedy for human sin.

Then, too, the way of escape in the Passover, by the slaying of an innocent and faultless lamb, unmistakably points to the greater sacrifice made by Him who was "holy, harmless, and undefiled," and who "was slain for us." The very terms that are used by God in the appointment of the Passover are profoundly suggestive of the great spiritual truths of the Atonement of Christ: "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are, and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt." It may be quite true these words have sometimes been so used in their application to the death of Christ as to offend good taste, and—what is of far greater importance—so as to convey an utterly unscriptural representation of the great Christian doctrine of the Cross, and to give occasion for the taunt that it is a "blood theology;" but the caricature of a truth does not make the truth itself false.

And the truth is given to us in Christ's own words, when, instituting that great Christian feast which was to be the permanent memorial of His death for human sin, He said, "This is my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Once more—but it is only possible to suggest this parallelism between the ancient Passover and "Christ our Passover"—after the paschal lamb had been slain and its blood sprinkled on the door-posts, it was to be eaten by those who had been saved from death. And it was our Lord Himself who declared in words whose solemn and profound meaning no human explanation seems to exhaust, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you." The Christ of our salvation is not only a Christ for us, but He is also a "Christ in us," not only "saving us from wrath" by His death, but making us partakers of the eternal life that dwelt in Him.

Lastly, although these illustrations suggestive of the text might be extended much further, it must not be forgotten that the Passover appealed to faith just as the Cross of Christ does.

It was comparatively easy for a Jew to say, "I do not understand the reason of this command to slay an innocent lamb, and to sprinkle its blood on the door-posts of my house—I do not see what this has to do with averting death from my home;" but if he had done so, and refused to avail himself of the passover lamb, he would not only have been in danger of death, but he would have shown that he was without

that which is the very heart of all true religion—trust or reliance upon his God, rather than in himself. It is this which is the moral element in faith, and when Christ appeals to our faith He is really appealing to that which touches the deepest springs of our nature, and which by its absence or presence infallibly indicates what manner of men we are. It is not knowledge of Christ nor feeling about Christ that saves the soul, but that living trust which surrenders the whole man to Christ, to His saving grace and supreme control. This is “the obedience of faith.”

SEPTEMBER 16.—“*He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.*”—Psalm cvii. 14.

The deliverance of Israel from Egypt has long been regarded by the Christian Church as the pregnant and suggestive image, if not actually the prophecy, of its own redemption from the power and thralldom of sin. In the language of its poetry and of its devotion, Canaan and Egypt have become types—the one of the bondage, the other of the liberty, of the children of God. The words of our text, although primarily referring to the exodus from Egypt, may therefore be taken, without doing any violence to their meaning, as suggesting the deliverance the Lord Jesus Christ accomplishes for the soul. The darkness and the slavery and the death which Egypt was to Israel, sin is to man, and it is from these Christ has come to redeem us.

From darkness, first of all. For sin is darkness as well as defilement. The soul alienated from God is also alienated from the truth. The head as well as the heart suffers. It is not that the man only *feels* wrong about God, or about himself, or about his relations to his fellow-men; he *thinks* wrong also about all these things. “The truth is not in him.” Now the redemption Christ accomplishes has for its object the whole man, not a part of him only. It has a mission to his intellect as well as to his conscience and his heart. It comes to put his thoughts, quite as much as his actions, right. Christ Himself promised His disciples that they “should know the truth,” and He declared Himself to be “the Light” as well as “the Life” of men.

It follows from this that for any man, however learned or able he may be, to turn away from Christ is to turn away from what is true in thought as well as from what is supernatural in its influence on the life. But this is too often denied in the present day. Indeed, it is frequently assumed that the rejection of Christianity is sufficiently accounted for by the progress of intellectual enlightenment, whereas the exact contrary is the fact. To turn away from Christ, and to refuse to admit His claims, is a sign, not of the strength, but of the weakness of the reason—is the result, not of its light, but of its darkness. The

highest homage of the intellect, as well as the truest love of the heart, is due to Christ, and to refuse to render either to Him is to dishonour ourselves as well as Christ. In the teaching of the young, and especially of young men, we cannot be too careful to insist on this fact, that whatever be the criminality of unbelief—and of this God alone is the judge—however it may mean moral, it must mean intellectual darkness. On the side of Him who was the Eternal Word, the Uncreated Reason, all truth must be. On the other hand, it is equally true, as we have said, that where Christ is received the “darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.” Coleridge once said that the intellectual and the spiritual would ultimately be found to be one; and the Gospel of St. John seems to hint the same truth, when it declares of Christ that “in Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

Then, too, Christ delivers us from bondage. For sin means slavery of one kind or another. No one doubts this in the case of the “sins of the flesh,” where we may sometimes see the wretched slave of vice delivered body and soul to its power; but it is just as true of the sins of the heart and of the intellect as it is of sins of the flesh. One man, for example, may be as much the slave of gold, chained hand and foot to his cursed passion for money, as another man is of lust. Or it may be as difficult and, humanly speaking, as impossible for him to break away from the chronic ungodliness of the heart as it is for another to rid himself of the miserable thralldom of drink. The same thing is true of sins of the intellect. A vicious habit of thought may become as incurable as a vicious habit of life, and with precisely the same result, that of fettering the freedom of the soul, and at last bringing it into bondage to itself.

Now, from the slavery and tyranny of sin in all its forms, the “bondage of corruption,” as St. Paul emphatically calls it, Christ comes to set us free. And He sets us free by reuniting the soul to God. He removes the guilt which had hitherto haunted the conscience as the shadow cast by its sin, and had turned God into an object of dread instead of love; He delivers the will from the alien and evil power that had usurped it and held it in bondage, and in place of self, He enthrones God as the Lord and centre of the life of the soul. And the moment the will becomes the servant of God, it enters into the “glorious liberty of the children of God.”

Perhaps it may be asked, if this liberty “wherewith Christ makes us free” is so great and glorious, why is it all who are slaves of sin do not at once gladly avail themselves of it. The answer is not far to seek. Even a slave will not abandon his slavery if he loves it. When the law for the abolition of slavery came into force in America, there were some

plantations where the slaves actually begged their masters not to free them; they had learned to love their chains; and in the same way, those who love their sin rather than God will refuse even the liberty Christ offers them. But there were other plantations where the slaves had long tasted the bitterness and degradation of slavery, and there they wept for joy on hearing the good news of their emancipation, and were ready to kiss the name of Abraham Lincoln which was at the foot of the proclamation of their freedom. And so wherever the misery of this more bitter slavery of sin has been felt, the soul will welcome the Lord Jesus as He comes to "break its bands in sunder," and will be ready to fall down at His feet, covering them with tears of gratitude, as it cries, "Lord, I am Thy servant, I am Thy servant; Thou hast loosed my bonds!"

Last of all, Christ delivers us from death. The Bible never conceals from us the tremendous reality of the peril to which sin exposes us. It tells us, plainly enough, that the "end of those things is death:" "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." And in our teaching we shall make a fatal mistake if, in order to conciliate, as we think, the opposition of some to the Gospel, we try to minimise the danger and the evil from which it comes to deliver us. It is the greatness of the danger that necessitated and justified the greatness of the interposition God has made in Christ to save the world; and the more profoundly that danger is realised the deeper will be our gratitude to Him who, instead of paying us "the wages of sin," which we have deserved, offers to us as "the gift of God" eternal life, "which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

SEPTEMBER 23.—"*The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of His own hands.*"—Psalm ix. 16.

This verse should be read in connection with the history in Exodus (chap. xiv. 10—31) to which it is attached, and which is the account of the crossing of the Red Sea, as on dry land, by the Israelites, and of the subsequent destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the sea. Both the deliverance of Israel and the destruction of the Egyptians are distinctly declared, in the history, to have been God's supernatural work. In fact, the whole narrative is one of those passages in the Old Testament from which it is simply impossible to eliminate the supernatural without destroying the history altogether. For, to say nothing of the unique effect this deliverance had upon the history and development of the Jewish nation, and of the way in which its miraculous character became inextricably interwoven with their faith and their worship, if we read the history in the most critical spirit, it requires a miracle to make it intelligible at all. For, as Dean Milman

observes, if there were no miracle, and if Moses, being acquainted with the tides of the Red Sea, simply availed himself of an ebb, whilst the Egyptians were overwhelmed with the returning flood, it is evident that without one particular wind, the ebb tide itself, in the narrowest part of the channel, could not be kept back long enough to allow a number of people to pass in safety. If so, we are driven to this astonishing conclusion, that "a man of the consummate prudence and sagacity and local knowledge attributed to Moses, altered, suspended, or at least did not hasten his march, and thus deliberately involved the people, whom he had rescued at so much pains and risk, in the danger of being overtaken by the enemy, led back as slaves, or massacred, *on the chance that an unusually strong wind would blow at a particular hour and for a given time, so as to keep back the flood, then die away, and allow the tide to return at the precise instant when the Egyptians were in the middle of their passage.*" The generalship of Moses, in such a case, would have been as miraculous in its wisdom, or its folly, as the history represents the crossing of the sea to have been in its manifestation of the power and glory of God.

But it is one very significant "note" of the supernatural events recorded in the Bible, that they are never represented as taking place for their own sake. Those sudden and sensational displays of power, of which the Apocryphal Gospels are full, and which form a prominent feature in nearly all the mythological religions of the world, are altogether absent from the supernatural records of the Bible. There is not a single miracle, wrought by God and recorded either in the Old or the New Testament, which is wrought merely for the sake of the wonder. Some moral purpose, more or less distinctly declared, runs through each of them, and constitutes, if we may so speak, the *raison d'être* of the miracle. The "mighty works" are "signs" as well.

This is emphatically true of this miraculous passage of the Red Sea, and the miraculous destruction of Pharaoh's army that followed it. They were for an end, and the end was this—the revelation, both to Egypt and to Israel, of the power and glory of God. "The Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah," were God's own words to Moses, in foretelling the miracle that was about to take place. Probably in no other way could the greatness and majesty of the God of Israel have been forced home upon the Egyptian nation as a whole. It was a people whose deepest ideas of deity were associated with tremendous and commanding power, and who strove to express their worship of power in the gigantic and colossal images they gave to their gods. To such a nation, this terrible overthrow of their king and of his army in the Red Sea, at the very moment when they seemed overtaking the children of Israel, who had fled from them, must have come home as

nothing else would have done. The "strong east wind" that parted the sea to allow Israel to pass over on dry land may have carried the living seeds of Israel's faith far and wide over the land of Egypt. The amount of true theistic knowledge which these and similar great events may have quickened outside the limits of Israel, is one of the unexplored problems in the history of the religions of the world.* Even the Arabs still retain the memory of this miracle in their local traditions. They "still call their fountains or wells by the name of Moses or Pharaoh. The whole coast is looked upon with awe. Whenever you ask an Arab where the Egyptians were drowned, he points to the part of the shore where you are standing; and there is one bay where, in the roaring of the waters, they pretend to hear the cries and wailings of the ghosts of Pharaoh's army."

Nor was the moral effect of the miracle on the Children of Israel less marked. It immediately gave birth, if not to a new, to a revival of their old religious faith. "And Israel," we read, "saw that great work which Jehovah did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared Jehovah, and believed Jehovah, and His servant Moses." So far the miracle vindicated and explained itself. In the words of the text, "Jehovah was known by the judgment which He executed."

The other characteristic of this "mighty work" remains to be noticed. It had a double side. It was mercy and judgment in one,—mercy to the people of God, judgment upon their enemies. And it is remarkable that this twofold aspect of the redeeming power of God runs all through the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments. Ancient prophecy utters its warning and its promise in one breath: "The day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." The Gospel of the grace of God is to one "the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life." The rivers of life and of death seem to run side by side even until the end. The last vision which this Book opens to us is of the city of God, bright with the light and glory of God, within whose gates no sound of sorrow or sight of evil ever enters, but without is seen the smoke of the "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Everywhere it is the same thing: the shadows do not disappear, they only deepen with the growing light.

Parents and teachers will not need to be told how all this bears on their own responsibility and that of their children. Christ's Gospel itself may not be good news, but be bad news to those who, by rejecting its offer of mercy, have added to their responsibility and deepened their guilt. The greatest blessing may be turned into the greatest curse, for "to whom much is given, of him shall much be required."

* See Exodus xv. 14—16.

SEPTEMBER 30.—“*Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.*”—Psalm lxi. 16.

It is possible the Psalmist refers in these words only to some great deliverance from temporal trouble he had experienced, rather than to the spiritual blessings he had found in God and His salvation. But this need not hinder us from taking this verse in its fullest and widest meaning. We may read it—we ought to read it—with the light of the New Testament shining upon it, and learn the lessons it should teach us. They seem to be two.

First, it teaches us the true idea of salvation. It is “*what God hath done for our soul.*” Now it is in this one point the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ differs fundamentally from all the false religions and from all the systems of moral reformation the world has ever known. All of these begin their message to man by telling him *what he is to do* to secure the favour of Heaven, or to amend his evil life. The Gospel, on the other hand, begins by declaring *what God has done to save man*. Instead of telling him to save himself, it invites him to “be saved.” It comes to him, not as a new code of moral duties he needs to learn, but as a “free gift” he is welcome to receive. Every other religion had said to the world, “Do this, and live.” The Gospel reversed the message and proclaimed, “Live, and do this.” And this is the reason for its constant appeal to belief, or faith, or trust, as the one condition of its saving man. If it had been an elaborate scheme of morals, it could have dispensed with trust, for it would have been sufficient for it to have given new light and clearness to the conscience, and a new impulse to the will; but since it is vitally and essentially a work God is willing to do for man, it is clear everything must depend—if man be free, and the Gospel never ceases to recognise and respect the freedom of man—on man’s willingness to allow God to save him, and this is really determined by his “faith.” The connection between belief, in this high moral sense of the word, and salvation is simply inevitable.

It is clear, also, if this be salvation, why so many who seem to be in earnest fail to attain it. They begin with a fatal mistake,—the mistake of endeavouring to save themselves, instead of trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to save them. And they find it very sad and weary work. The burden and responsibility of trying to save their own souls grow unbearable, as they become increasingly in earnest and make the bitter discovery that the more they strive to save themselves, the further off salvation seems. Only those who, like Luther, have passed through an experience like this, who have known the hopelessness of the struggle, can tell the blessed light and peace that broke upon the soul when God’s way of salvation suddenly became clear before them. It was worth having lived through all the weary struggles of former days to

hear the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

But the text teaches us another lesson as well, and it is this, that when God has saved our souls we are to confess it before men. It was not enough for the Psalmist to know "what God had done for his soul;" he invites others to come and hear, that he may declare it to them. Now the confession of God's salvation, so far at any rate as confession is made with the lip, is one of those Christian duties in which most of us constantly and grievously fail. We find it easy to talk about politics, or literature, or art, but we are generally silent about our religious life and faith. It would excite considerable astonishment, even among a company of Christian people, if at the close of an interesting conversation on miscellaneous subjects, someone were to say, "Now listen to me, and I will tell you what God has done for my soul." The Lord Jesus Christ and the greatness and glory of the salvation He has accomplished are the only subjects about which it is forbidden to speak.

Perhaps it may be said, in answer to this, that there is a danger of too much freedom in talking of sacred subjects, or that the soul has its modesty as well as the body, and resents exposure quite as keenly, and that this is why it shrinks from uncovering the secrets of its spiritual history to others. All this is perfectly true, and fully justifies us in not speaking too freely or indiscriminately of "what God hath done for our soul," but the question is, Does it justify us in never speaking at all? Or if it be urged that after all the life is the great thing, and if that be a witness to the truth, it can matter very little if we do not speak in words about it, again we answer, Be it so. But did the witness of the life satisfy Christ? None of us can pretend to bear such a confession of the truth in our lives as Christ did in His, and yet He was more than an Example for men, He was a Voice to them as well; He was "the Word" as well as "the Life," and if we follow Him, we shall find there are times when the silent influence of an example does not satisfy us, and when we shall be compelled to say, in the words of the Apostles, "We cannot but speak those things which we have seen and heard."

The truth is, some confession of our faith is as much needed for the sake of our own faith as it is for that of others. Confession is to conviction what air is to flame. To compel faith to live a silent and secluded life within the soul is to endanger the very life of faith; it needs the light and the air for its own health and growth. Besides which, no man really knows how much or how little he believes until he tries to utter his faith with his lips. It is quite possible some of us never confess our faith before men, because we have no faith to confess.

Norwich.

G. S. BARRETT.

ON THE STYLE OF HARMONY PROPER FOR
CONGREGATIONAL MUSIC.

IN writing on styles of harmony, one cannot help being in some degree technical, just as in criticising a painting it is necessary to speak of the laws of perspective and the principles of grouping. But as a person of ordinary taste can judge whether he likes a picture or not without any formal knowledge of the painter's art, so those who are quite ignorant of the jargon of musical theorists, but have an ear for music, can discriminate between styles of harmony in the music they hear. One may hope therefore to interest the general reader in a subject which has great importance for all lovers of Church music.

The remark has often been made that sacred music is always a generation or more behind secular music. What one generation forbids another accepts; the innovations of one bold composer are the commonplaces of his successors. No one can examine the progress of Church music without acknowledging that this is true. Hence it comes to pass that not until now are we feeling in psalmody the full force of the influence of Mendelssohn, Spohr, and other writers in the free style. It is only necessary to compare an anthem by such a writer as Croft with one by a composer of to-day—Henry Smart, Goss, or Sullivan—to see how the notion of the Church style has been modified. We shall, however, in the present paper confine ourselves to hymn-tunes, which, as a terse expression of a composer's feeling, are no less characteristic of their period than longer compositions.

Everyone who listens first to the Old Hundredth and then to one of Dr. Dykes' tunes, say "Jesu, lover of my soul," feels the difference between the modern and the ancient manner. It is as the diction of Chaucer is to that of Tennyson, or the language of the Authorised Version to that of Matthew Arnold. The rules of the old style are well known, and can be imitated by modern writers when they choose, like Chatterton, to cast their thoughts in antique form. But the use of the old counterpoint is at best an affectation, foreign to modern feeling and practice.

Our hymn tunes may be said to belong to three types. First, we have the grand old tunes like the Old Hundredth, French, and Winchester Old, harmonised with the chords mostly in their root positions, massive and imposing. Then come the dulcet tunes of a later time, such as Rockingham and Melcombe, in which the progressions are less rugged and bold, a more sweet and flowing style being cultivated by the composers, who belonged to the period of the English glee. Now we seem to be arriving at a third type, in which harmony, not melody, is studied, and in which the composer, if he can delight the ear by one novel pro-

gression, is content to die happy. If the first type is awe-inspiring, the second gives pleasure, while the effect of the third is generally melancholy.

The following will serve as a specimen of the hymn-tune of the period; like the hymn of the period, it is rather pensive and grief-laden:—

Now, Fa-ther, now, in Thy dear presence kneel-ing, Our spi-rits

yearn to feel Thy kind-ling love; Now make us strong, we

need Thy deep re-veal-ing, Of trust, and strength, and calmness from a-bove.

Amid the various styles of harmony which we find in Church music, what are the canons which should regulate us? The teaching and practice of psalmodists is very varied. The late Rev. W. H. Havergal may be regarded as the prophet of the purists. In his "Old Church Psalmody" he shows himself to be a musical Præ-Raphaelite. As Wordsworth found his ideal life among a few Westmoreland shepherds, so Mr. Havergal wishes for nothing more in Church music than the old Psalter tunes, or new ones written upon the same model. He glories in the "severe but pleasing simplicity" of Tallis and Playford, and deploras the plague of the "glee-like, sing-song productions" that were the offspring of the Methodist revival. Mr. Havergal advocates the strict style, because he says it is what persons of sober taste and devout

feeling like, and he adds that even those whose misfortune it has been to sing tunes of a more light and trashy character gradually come round to it. That is one view of Church music, and though there is some truth in it, no one can suppose that it can prevail in the present day.

At the opposite extreme from Mr. Havergal we have Mr. Barnby. In the preface to his collection of tunes he writes :—

“The terms effeminate and maudlin, with others, are freely used now-a-days to stigmatise such new tunes as are not direct imitations of old ones. And yet it has always appeared strange to me that musicians should be found who, whilst admitting that seventeenth-century tunes were very properly written in what we may call the natural idiom of that period, will not allow nineteenth-century ones to be written in the idiom of that day. You may imitate and plagiarise the old tunes to any extent, and in all probability you will be spoken of as one who is ‘thoroughly imbued with the truly devotional spirit of the old ecclesiastical writers,’ but you are not permitted on any account to give your natural feelings fair play ; or, in short, to write spontaneously. The strangest part of the argument, however, is that whilst you are urged to imitate the old works, you are warned in the same breath that to succeed is altogether without the bounds of possibility. The question then naturally arises, Would it not be better, though at the risk of doing feebler things, to follow your own natural style, which at least would possess the merit of truth, and to leave the task of endeavouring to achieve an impossibility to those who prefer it ? For my part, I have elected to imitate the old writers in their independent method of working, rather than their works.”

Mr. Hullah, writing on the same subject, says :—

“Why, so long as they move in different, though parallel, lines, should sacred music be always in arrear of secular ? On what principle are even the wisest and best people of one age to dictate to those of another, not truths which are eternal, but mere forms of expression, in themselves non-essential, and, as all experience proves, ephemeral ? A late musical writer in answer to the question, ‘And must we then have no new Church music ?’ replied, ‘Yes, but no new *style*.’ Surely an answer more consistent with common sense would have been, ‘No, let us have no new music unless it be in a new style.’ For is it likely that a musician trained in the idiom of Mozart will ever surpass or equal Palestrina in the use of his ? And what else but the hope of doing so could justify the composition of new music in the style of the sixteenth century, or in any style other than that of the composer’s own epoch ? That modern Church musicians should penetrate themselves to the utmost with the spirit of the great masters of the age of Palestrina is in the highest degree to be wished ; that they should attempt to use their forms of expression is as much to be deprecated. In setting recent hymns the composers have not stopped to consider how Tallis or Gibbons would have set them (putting the impossible case of their having had to do so), but they have simply tried how, in the musical idiom of their own time, they could best express the thoughts and feelings of contemporary poets.”

Between the composers who write hymn-tunes in the modern style there is a considerable difference. Mr. Hullah, for example, shows moderation, and rather avoids inflected notes, while Mr. Barnby crowds his tunes with chromatics, almost in the manner of Spohr, leaving Mr. Havergal and his counterpoint far behind. Mr. Barnby's tune in G minor to "Jesu, lover of my soul," and Dr. Stainer's in D major to "Thou hidden love of God," both of which are in most of the recent collections, are conspicuous examples of the modern hymn-tune.

We cannot listen to one of these compositions when played upon the pianoforte or the organ without allowing that their rich chromatic effects are very delightful to the ear. Nevertheless, while acknowledging their exceeding beauty, one feels that it is a beauty which does not last. In proportion to the ravishing effect of these progressions, the ear does not care to have them repeated. We always feel this by the time we get to the fourth or fifth verse. The weight of dissonance, which at first delights the ear, soon palls upon it. Our palates are surfeited. It is the strawberry-jam of music. Those who have listened to one of Spohr's oratorios will feel the truth of this remark. It is quite true that music would be dull and insipid without discords, but the delight which the ear experiences is not in the crash of the discords themselves, but in following their orderly motion into consonance. Consonance is the substance of music; dissonance its adornment. We never tire of plain chords, such as those in the Old Hundredth. On the whole, the grandest progression in music is from tonic to dominant, or *vice versâ*.

These are the æsthetic considerations which should lead us at least to be very guarded in our use of chromatic harmonies in hymn-tunes. There are, however, other considerations. All schools of psalmodists intend their compositions to be sung by a choir, and some of us even go so far as to desire that the congregation should sing them too. Now, tunes such as the two that have been named are very difficult to sing in tune; their chromatic chords try the skill of even a first-rate choir. A recent visit to Mr. Barnby's own church satisfied the present writer that the best choir is liable to get sadly out of tune in the restless modulations which occur in the style of music sung there. If then a trained choir stumble over these harmonies, what will become of a congregation? The organ thunders forth the chords, but what do the people do? These ingenious harmonies demand a balance of parts, which is what at present we never get in congregational psalmody. The effect of these modern tunes, when heard in an ordinary service, is most distressing. A number of men sing the air, while others make attempts, all more or less out of tune, to sing their parts. There is a feebleness about the whole thing, which is almost enough to convert us to Mr. Havergal's views in favour of diatonic harmonies.

The fact is, these tunes are written to be played rather than sung. We strum them on our pianofortes, and sigh over the most beautiful of the discords. Our fingers know nothing of awkward and unvocal intervals, or of the effort and training which is needed to hold a strong dissonance with the voice. The study of the pianoforte, while it has discouraged the practice of purely vocal music, has cultivated the sensibility to musical sounds to a remarkable extent, for the mere habit of listening to music cultivates the ear. It is this wide-spread appreciation of instrumental music which has in recent years affected our psalmody.

But the style of instrumental music is necessarily distinct from that of vocal; the singer and the player need different treatment. A dissonance of a semi-tone is no more trouble to play than the most ordinary concord, but it is almost impossible to get a choir to hold it with perfect resolution and in perfect tune. The old counterpoint was born of singing rather than of playing. It comes to us from a time when instruments were feeble and imperfect, and it studied that smooth motion of the parts which is so effective in vocal harmony. The later tunes, bearing traces of the glee or the Handelian chorus, are no less distinctly vocal. The effects that are congenial to voices are studied, and what voices cannot do is carefully avoided. Now-a-days composers of hymn-tunes write for the organ, and seldom stop to consider whether what they write can be sung.

The tunes of the late Dr. Dykes are good examples of the judicious use of free harmonies. There is not one that does not contain something strikingly modern, and yet the colouring is never overdone, and the progressions are eminently smooth and singable. In later editions of his tunes a few slight alterations may be observed, and they are all in the direction of the singer's convenience.

In order to illustrate the various styles of harmony that we have discussed, we will take a few examples. Below appears the melody of the Old Hundredth tune, harmonised in three different ways. Let these be played over, and everyone, harmonist or not, will recognise the fact that the same melody may be accompanied by very different harmonies:—

The Old Hundredth.

PAST.



N N



PRESENT.



FUTURE.



The first version, which I have called that of "the past," is the one to which we are accustomed, and it is certainly the one most congenial to the tune, because it represents the harmonic school of the period to which the tune belongs. Even those who know nothing of harmony will recognise its quaintness ; the fifth chord, and the last progression of the last measure but one, having specially an antique sound. The chords are mostly in their strongest positions, and the whole effect is sonorous and grand.

The second version, which I have entitled "the present," is less masculine in effect, but more polished and smooth. Had the tune been written by one of the more cautious of our living composers, it would probably have been harmonised after this fashion. The step-wise motion of the bass, with the free use of inversions, gives a modern sound to the chords without the use of a single altered note.

The arrangement of "the future" will probably be pronounced horrible. It is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the extreme chromatic style of Mr. Barnby, and other recent writers less distinguished. The piece is intended as a caricature, and the contrast of the harmonies with the old melody is ridiculous ; but passages may be found in recent hymn-tunes every bit as bad. It is necessary to say that the arrangement is perfectly correct in harmony ; every discord is resolved according to rule, and each combination of notes can receive a satisfactory theoretical explanation. My object has been to crowd as many discords as possible into the space. How much discord the ear will bear is of course a matter of taste. These chromatic chords are the adjectives, the strong language of the musician, and the arrangement affords a good example of musical swearing. But as in the language of speech, so in the language of sounds, forcible expressions should be held in reserve, and cautiously used, if they are to produce any effect.

Professor Macfarren, remarking on a series of chromatic progressions not unlike those just given, says : "Some ingenious authors amusingly explain all musical effects as imitations of the natural noises we daily witness, such as the chirping of birds, the rippling of water, the howling of tempests, and the like ; and however unacceptable, however untenable the proposition as a whole, we must all admit that it derives some odour of verity from a comparison of the chromatic progressions I have just shown you, with the sound of wind roaring through crevices, when our fear, or our solitude at least, quickens our perception."

Another point may be noticed in connection with this last arrangement of the Old Hundredth. In churches which use Gregorian music, it is the custom for the choir and congregation to sing in unison, while the organist plays a free accompaniment. In the case of the Gregorian tones this free accompaniment is a great anachronism, for the tones

come down to us from an age when harmony was probably unknown, and yet they are accompanied in the strongest modern manner,—Lefebure Wely shaking hands with Ambrose. Things quite as bad as this arrangement of the Old Hundredth, and discords not so carefully resolved, may be heard in any church where Gregorians are used. The arrangement in question shows how chromatic harmonies disguise a melody. The air of the Old Hundredth remains the same in each of the three versions, yet few persons will recognise it in the last, unless they are told what to expect. Even supposing, then, that congregations could be induced to sing in unison, this style of accompaniment is not desirable, because it hides the melody.

The tendency of modern writers to sacrifice the melody of their tunes for the sake of the harmony, has already been noticed. The old tunes, such as Hanover, the later Rockingham, and the recent Regent-square and St. Peter, written in the same style, are thoroughly melodious; the air is such as one can remember without effort. But in these modern tunes the air is only one of four parts; it is sacrificed to the exigencies of the harmony, and there is nothing in it to attract us. The “tune” is in the harmonic progressions. As an extreme case—a degree worse than is to be met with at present—here is an air, if such it may be called, with no melody at all:—



Nothing more doleful and uninteresting than this can be imagined, yet here are the same notes harmonised:—



It cannot be said that this makes a good tune ; but it sounds rather pleasantly on an instrument, and proves how much interest may be imparted to a dry melody by motion and point in the harmonies. But what of this as a style of harmonising congregational music ? In congregations the lower parts are weak, and any effect which depends on them will probably be lost, except in so far as the organ makes up for the deficiency of the singers. But the hymn-tune, if it is to be interesting and inviting—that is, if it is to be sung generally—must be complete in itself, and not dependent upon the organ for its beauty and form. Musicians may educate themselves to what they please, but popular music must always have a dominating melody in the highest part, and natural, singable under parts.

It has been urged by several writers on psalmody, and recently with much ability in this magazine, that the proper arrangement of a tune for congregational singing is that which gives the melody to the tenor. This part, it is urged, can be sung by all, whether men or women, boys or girls, who have not inclination or ability to take their proper part. Below this *canto fermo*, or plain song, is placed a bass, and above it a higher part, called the counter-tenor. Both of these are to be sung by such of the congregation and choir as can read from notes. This, as is well known, was the plan adopted in the psalters of the Reformation times, except that they had two parts above the melody instead of one. "The custom," says Mr. Havergal, "arose, it seems, from the desire to render unisonous singing in the congregations more agreeable to all true lovers of harmony. In an age where Psalms were sung with great energy by large masses of people, the men's voices, predominating by their power, would engross the ear, and clearly sustain the melody. The devout musician, leaving that melody to be sung with all simplicity and fulness, employed a few superior voices to encompass it with harmony. The process was analogous to that of an architect who substantiates and ornaments a plainly-built edifice, by first making good the foundation to it, and then adding a new roof embellished in becoming style."

This form of harmony may still be heard in the Jewish synagogues, where highly-trained choirs of boys sing a descant above the heavy chant of the men ; and to hear it is to feel that it is unnatural. The apparent justification of the plan is to be found in the actual form which congregational singing takes. There are always a number of men who sing the air an octave below the women, and this is said to spoil the four-part harmony, and conflict with the tenor part. The organ, however, whose presence may now be counted upon in English psalmody, covers up this defect. In ordinary congregations the voices of the men who sing the air do not, as in Reformation times, absorb the higher

octave of the soprano, whose bright and clear quality is always paramount. The experience of every worshipper must support this statement. It is a general rule, in "registering" the organ, that the lower octave covers the higher—that an 8 ft. stop is absorbed by a 16 ft.—but this is not the effect at present in our psalmody. The only objections that a harmonist can raise to men singing the air are, first, that if either the tenor or the contralto move in fourths with the soprano, these will become fifths when that part is sung an octave lower; and second, that it may happen that the air, when sung by men's voices, will go below the bass, and invert the chords. The fear of consecutive fifths is a theoretical one only, for the stops of the organ give us this combination constantly, and, provided the men's voices are not strong, no ill effect is felt. As to the air going below the bass, the possibility of it ceases when the pedals of the organ play the lowest part an octave under the voices. Far be it from us to encourage men to sing the air; our only object is to show that their doing so is no fatal objection, from a musical point of view, to congregational part-singing. The plan of counter, tenor, and bass, is therefore objectionable, because it is uncalled for, our present arrangement of parts being satisfactory; because it does not provide employment for each of the four natural voices—the high and low of women, and the high and low of men; and because it is certain that the form which psalmody has taken, of giving the melody to the highest part, is the most natural and pleasing, in popular music at least. "Psalmody of this kind," says Mr. Havergal, referring to Ravenscroft's arrangement of the melody in the tenor, "was fitted only for the age in which it originated. It required a mass of plain tenor voice, with a full round bass, and a few skilful trebles and counter-tenors. Such a combination was at perfection only in Elizabeth's day."

There is every difference between writing a tune with four ornate parts, each of which is essential to its effect, and plainly harmonising a bold melody, which may be sung and enjoyed without even its bass. On this plain style congregational psalmody should mainly be modelled if it is to remain popular. Handel's, and even Mendelssohn's, most powerful choral effects are produced from plain chords. Witness the shouts of "Hallelujah" in the *Messiah* chorus, and of "Thanks be to God" in the *Elijah*. The researches of Helmholtz have shown us why, from a scientific point of view, concords must be sonorous and distinct, and discords comparatively weak and, at a distance, confused.

This paper takes for granted what many regard as a chimera—that congregations should be encouraged and taught to sing in harmony. The whole argument depends upon this, for if the choir are to sing to the congregation, or if the congregation are to sing in unison with harmonies from the organ, it matters very little what style of harmony

be adopted. With a large mass of singers, many of them with wavering and false intonation, the only chords that can sound satisfactory are the plainest. No one would wish to deny people the enjoyment of the sweet harmonies of many recent composers, but in so far as they depart from the plain style these tunes are fitted to be played in the family circle, on the pianoforte, or organ, or harmonium, rather than introduced into public worship. Psalmists have great need at the present time to take to heart some remarks of Mr. Havergal on the tunes of the old Psalters. "They are," he says, "such as the least learned singers may sing, for, abounding with easy progressions, no great skill is requisite even for their good performance. Herein the sound sense of the age was displayed. *Thought was taken for the common people.*"

J. SPENCER CURWEN.

MEMORY.

PRECIOUS glimpses through the future's curtain
 He may catch, who sees the past unveiled ;
 Else, in seeking for a goal uncertain,
 Blindly groping, will and heart had failed.

What were love, its faded flowers uncherished ?
 What were life, its bygone days forgot ?
 Memory may live, when hope has perished,
 Hope were dead, if we remembered not.

All our past, in colours soft and tender,
 Stretches backward till it melts in night ;
 While the future, robed in hazy splendour,
 Shows us transient phantoms of delight ;—

Glorified reflections of the present,
 Spirits of the days that once have been ;
 Hopes of bright perfection, when life's crescent
 Fills the orb'd outline, dimly seen.

Yesterday's delights will haunt to-morrow,
 Subtle essences of fleeting joys ;
 Till the spectre of remembered sorrow,
 Their ethereal witchery destroys.

Rays of memory have sunned our pleasure,
 In the self-same light regret will spring ;
 Sorrow is man's burden, yet his treasure,
 Proves him servant, yet proclaims him king.

Sharpest anguish, meaner things besetting,
 Finds a perfect and a swift relief ;
 He alone, immortal, unforgetting,
 Wears the sombre coronal of grief.

In his heart a quenchless fire is burning,
 Kindled ere his conscious life began ;
 Lord of restless thought and noble yearning,
 Reigns in loneliness the soul of man.

All the earth can yield him no communion,
 Converse with the heavens he seeks to gain ;
 Deep and high is the eternal union,
 That the struggling spirit may attain.

He who gazes on a bright hereafter,
 Sees a staff, where others find a rod ;
 Solemn memories, that check our laughter,
 Draw us nearer to the heart of God.

CONSTANCE C. W. NADEN.



TWO SONNETS.

(*From the German of Heine.*)

TO MY MOTHER.

I.

IT is my wont to carry my head high,
 And somewhat proud and stubborn are my ways ;
 Ev'n if the king should look me in the face,
 I would return his look with steady eye.
 Yet, mother dear, whenever thou art nigh,
 In presence of thy sweet and blessed grace,
 My haughty temper from its loftiest place
 Descends into a meek humility.

Is it that thy brave spirit conquers mine—
 Thy keen, clear spirit that doth flash and shine,
 And soareth high into the light divine?
 Ah! to mine eyes the tears of sorrow start,
 When I remember with how many a dart
 I must have pierced thy loving, faithful heart!

II.

Once I forsook thee on a wild, mad quest:
 It was my wish to roam the wide world through,
 To see if I could find Love deep and true,
 And, finding Love, to clasp her to my breast.
 In every street I sought for Love's sweet rest;
 At every door, with hands outstretched anew,
 I begged some crumbs of love, however few,
 But only met with hatred, scorn, and jest.
 Thus seeking Love, I wandered on strange ground—
 Still seeking Love—but Love I never found;
 Then home I turned, with hopes all dead and past:
 Thou cam'st to meet me; and, with glad surprise,
 Lo! there I saw—all swimming in thine eyes—
 The sweet and long-sought Love, now found at last!

T. C. F.

WILL THE BISHOPS SAVE PROTESTANTISM?

IT is really a pity that our Bishops so often remind us of that saying of Cicero's about the augurs of his time, with which Ellis's "Exercises" or the "Delectus" made us familiar in our school-boy days. When we read some of their speeches, we are fairly puzzled to understand how it was possible for them to preserve their gravity whilst making them. Thus, at the late session of Convocation, the Primate is reported to have congratulated himself and his right reverend brethren on the increasing disposition of the clergy to submit themselves to the guidance of their spiritual fathers. The immediate occasion for his observations was an announcement by the Bishop of Lichfield of his intention to present a petition on the subject of ritual, in harmony with resolutions adopted by Convocation ten years ago, to the effect that no change ought to be made without the sanction of the Bishop of the diocese. On this the Primate remarked: "I hope that when the petition is presented, it will be found to be one among several symptoms which I have observed of a willingness on the part of the clergy to be

guided by their Bishops in different matters which have hitherto caused a great deal of confusion. Hitherto, as your lordships cannot help feeling, there has been rather a manifest unwillingness on the part of many persons to be guided by their Bishops; but I am not without hope that symptoms of a better mind are to be seen." The petition, when presented, did undoubtedly fulfil the hope which his Grace thus expressed. Whether it is to be regarded as a sign of returning loyalty on the part of the recusants among the clergy is not quite so clear. It was not to be supposed that men like the Deans of Winchester, Worcester, and Gloucester, or Canons Barry, Miller, and Lightfoot, or Archdeacons Hessey, Purey-Cust, and Hannah, or Messrs. W. H. Lyttelton, Pigou, Erskine Clarke, or MacLagan would hesitate to avow, in the most public manner, their "sincere loyalty to their spiritual rulers, as well as their true sympathy with them in the difficulties of the present times," or even to express their "resolution to bow to the decision of their bishops on all matters concerning the service of the Church, in which the same having been diversely taken and having been referred to them, they shall authoritatively declare their judgment." The Establishment must be in evil case, indeed, if the loyalty of clergymen of this type is so doubtful that a declaration from them is to be hailed with such effusive rejoicing. It would have been a different matter if the names of some of the extreme section—those who are really "suspects"—were to be found among the signatures. The Dean of Manchester, indeed, is among the memorialists, but his High Churchmanship, though of a sufficiently decided character, has yet a certain element of moderation in it, and, besides, he may reasonably feel that the character of his diocesan warrants him in thus submitting to his judgment, without any fear of hampering his own freedom. But his, so far as we know, is the only name which can be regarded as that of an Anglo-Catholic leader. The Ritualists are all conspicuous by their absence, and, this being the case, it is about as reasonable for the Primate to congratulate his brethren on such an address as an instance of the growth of loyalty among the clergy, as it would be for the Speaker of the House of Commons to welcome, as a sign of returning loyalty and peace among the members, a memorial to which were attached the names of a few leading Conservatives and Liberals, but which not one of the obstructive Irish brigade had signed.

Were the Speaker, in such case, to express his satisfaction at the prospect of returning tranquillity, the unruly members might not unnaturally conclude that, for some reason, he was afraid to strike, and wished, therefore, to put as fair an appearance as possible on a temporising policy, and to hide his real weakness behind an assumption of superior dignity. That the Ritualist clergy will put a similar interpreta-

tion upon the optimist expressions of the Primate is unquestionable. They will laugh to scorn the suggestion that the Bishops are to fetter their action, and they will take the desires expressed by the Archbishop and his colleagues for more harmonious relations as indications of their wish to patch up a truce on any terms short of actual surrender to the rebels. The whole tone of the discussion or conversation which the Primate introduced revealed the existence and strength of a belief which is peculiar to their lordships, but is held by them with an invincible obstinacy, as to the possibility of isolating a small section of extreme and impracticable men from the main body of the High Church clergy. It is this which prompts the unctuous speeches which are intended to allay the angry feelings that controversies and lawsuits may possibly have excited; this that leads the more sanguine of the Prelates to attach, or affect to attach, such significance to things which really mean so little; this that makes their denunciation of the most flagrant evils tame and spiritless, and paralyses their action, when policy alone, if it looked beyond the immediate present, would make it vigorous and uncompromising. If all that has occurred during the last six months has not disabused their lordships' expectations that their honied words may induce High Churchmen to leave the Ritualists to their fate, it may fairly be concluded that they are beyond the possibility of conversion. Still, even recognising this, we wonder how the Bishops can look each other in the face while talking about the signs of a revived loyalty in the clergy. There has been no more characteristic feature of the Ritualist movement, in its later stages, than the insolent contempt, not to say the ill-mannered rudeness, with which its journals have treated the Bishops. If there had been a cessation, or even a mitigation, of this violence, we should welcome it in the interests of our common Christianity, which has been scandalised by the attitude and language which a number of Christian ministers have thought it seemly to adopt towards those to whom they have professed allegiance as their spiritual rulers. But no reader of the *Church Times* can believe in anything of the kind. The two Archbishops are lampooned and ridiculed after the old fashion; the Bishop of Gloucester is still held up as an object of mingled detestation and contempt; and if any other Prelate happens to cross the path of these innovators, he meets with similar treatment.

The only fact to which the Primate can point in confirmation of his too confident optimism is one which, for his own sake, had better be consigned to oblivion. It is a long time since an Archbishop has played so discreditable a part as that which he was content to accept in the Ridsdale farce. Mr. Ridsdale was willing to submit to the law, provided the Archbishop would exercise a power to which he has no possible pretension, and, in doing so, virtually assert that supremacy of

the Church for which the Ritualist party are contending. If we had been living in other times, or if the whole affair had been regarded by the world at large as a subject for serious treatment, the Archbishop might have been called upon to answer for his assumption of such functions. As it is, it meets only with ridicule, but if his Grace supposes that the English nation would have tolerated such hierarchical pretensions if they could conceive it possible that they could ever be converted into a precedent, he is greatly mistaken. Mr. Ridsdale's postures and vestment, lights and incense, would be a far less serious evil than the establishment of a dispensing power at Lambeth, which to-day permits a clergyman to obey the law, but which, wielded by a Prelate of the type of Becket or Laud, would encourage the priesthood in disobedience to the State. We have felt throughout that Archbishop Tait's conduct in this matter has been far too lightly treated. In one aspect, indeed, it may properly be regarded with contempt, but it is just out of beginnings like this that the most shameful usurpations of the priesthood have developed themselves. The Archbishop, no doubt, meant nothing more than to humour what he probably regarded as the idle fancy of a crotchety man. But it is conceivable that the See of Canterbury may, if the Establishment survive the present primacy, be held by a man of a different temper, who may be eager to wield the power which, on Mr. Ridsdale's invitation, Dr. Tait has assumed. This is a side of it, however, on which his Grace does not appear to have looked, and therefore he congratulates the Upper House of Convocation on the submission of Mr. Ridsdale, utterly ignoring the great gain which the Folkestone vicar has secured. The country, at all events, may well hope that if loyalty is only to be obtained on such terms, the clergy may be left to take their own course and abide the consequences.

The discussion marks out the wide difference there is between the view of the present crisis taken by the Bishops, and that of those who care either for the Protestantism of the Church or the liberties of the nation. The Bishops seem—if we judge them unfairly, they have only their own words and deeds to thank for such a misconception—to care only for peace, and not to be particularly anxious as to the expedients by which it may be maintained. The nation thinks less of peace than of righteousness, and would rather see the Establishment overthrown than allow the worst doctrines and practices of Rome to find a safe resting-place within its precincts. True men do not understand this weak twaddle about the loyal temper of the clergy, and before they give any heed to it, ask for some less questionable evidence of this clerical meekness. If there had been an honest repudiation, not only of the "Priest in Absolution" but of the practice of Confession itself; if the Society of

the Holy Cross had been dissolved, or those who resolved to cling to it made to feel that they would be regarded as unfaithful sons of the Church; if the offending priests had laid aside their vestments and adopted a more sober ritual, admitting that they had been mistaken as to the spirit of the Anglican Church,—there would no doubt have been a general disposition to rejoice in so marvellous a revolution. But while the confessional is in full activity, and its employment justified, not only by men so strongly committed to extreme views as Mr. Stanton, but by a popular preacher like Mr. Knox-Little, who has won such honours in Manchester as a “missioner,” and is at once a favourite of the Bishop and the people, and, what is most significant, by a veteran like Dr. Pusey, who has interposed in a manner which commands admiration by its chivalry, even from those who most disapprove of his teaching, it is nothing short of treason to those great principles for which some of the Bishops profess themselves so anxious, when they invite us to believe that the loyal attachment of the clergy to their spiritual chiefs will yet be the palladium of Protestantism. If the present development of Romanism among the clergy be consistent with loyalty to their Bishops, how can that loyalty serve in any way to reassure the country? If it be not, what are we to think of the confidence which the Primate and his brethren express? In either case, how is the reasonable dissatisfaction of those who complain that the National Church is being betrayed into the hands of its old Romish foes by a few of its own clergy, appeased and satisfied?

What the Protestants in the Establishment desire to see is a display of vigour towards those who are not amenable to the kind words and amiable methods of too conciliatory Bishops. The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol showed a true insight into the situation when he said: “I quite concur in what has been said by my right reverend brother, the Bishop of Lichfield, when he expressed the opinion that very many will, by degrees, if we have only some forbearance, follow those wise, proper, and Christian examples,” that is, of certain clergymen who have submitted themselves to the will of their Lichfield diocesan. This worthy Bishop, be it observed in passing, is hardly less an object of suspicion than the Ritualist clergy themselves, and the idea that his will is to be supreme in an important diocese is not likely to afford any consolation to disquieted Protestants. But Dr. Ellicott believes that the Bishops could set all right if the clergy would only allow them to exercise their discretion and recognise their authority as supreme. We doubt whether there are a dozen intelligent men outside the Episcopal circle who share the opinion, but that is not at all likely to disturb the complacency of the Bishop of Gloucester, who hopes that the clergy “will learn, from what has been said, how very desirous the Bishops of this province

are to meet the clergy who are committed to their pastoral superintendence in all things that are right and reasonable." Unfortunately for his theory, the clergy do not wish to meet them. The Bishops woo them as unsuccessfully as a noble lord, recently elected as a county member, sought the favour of a sturdy Nonconformist maiden, whose father's vote he and his canvassers were eager to secure. "Miss ——," said one of the party, in his blandest accents, "Lord —— wishes to see your father." "My father," was the prompt and decided reply, "does not wish to see Lord ——." "Probably, you will do as well yourself. Lord —— would like to be introduced to you." "I do not wish to be introduced to Lord ——." The effect upon the astonished electioneers, who supposed that the mention of a lord's name would be enough to overpower the village maiden, may be more easily conceived than described. One final effort was made before leaving the house. "Lord —— would like to shake hands with you, Miss ——." But still came the one decided response, "I have no desire to shake hands with Lord ——." That determined young lady was not more inaccessible to the overtures of the exalted young lordling, which, as she perfectly well knew, were inspired only by an eager desire for her father's vote, than are recalcitrant priests to those benevolent utterances of Bishops whose action they not uncharitably believe to be inspired by zeal for the Establishment, rather than by regard for their clergy. Dr. Ellicott is only dreaming a vain dream when he trusts that "what has been said already, and what may yet be said, will have the effect of accelerating in some degree the movement towards that reasonable and filial obedience which is one of the main principles of an Episcopal Church." There is no such movement, and no one ought to know it better than the Bishops themselves. Here and there some individuals who have been sucked in by the strong current of sacramental feeling, though they have no deep convictions of their own, may have been scared by the intense excitement which has been aroused, and have abandoned some obnoxious practice; but a movement on the part of Ritualists towards "reasonable and filial obedience" to the Bishops it is utter folly to talk about. Much more reasonable is it to ask, with the Bishop of Gloucester, when descending from the lofty regions of hierarchical illusion and coming down to that of real fact, he suggests the sensible inquiry, "What are to be our relations towards those who notoriously continue practices and usages that have been pronounced contrary to the law, and who do not seek the counsel or advice of their Bishops?" In his inmost heart the Bishop must feel that there he is speaking of the immense majority of that section of the clergy who have occasioned the present commotion, and that the question which he thus started was really the only serious one which Convocation had to discuss.

Here, then, we look anxiously for some clear and certain sound. We all know that the Bishops will be as tolerant as possible of any priestly eccentricities of the clergy, partly because they have a natural leaning to those who exalt the dignity of the order of which they are the acknowledged heads, and partly because the risks of any attempt to check even the extravagances they may not quite relish, are too grave to be lightly encountered. We are much more solicitous to find out the limits of their patient endurance, and, still further, to learn what steps they are prepared to take when these limits have been over-passed. On these points the Bishop of Gloucester gives us no information. He states the difficulty and then leaves it. "Is it desirable" (he asks) "that we should earnestly and affectionately invite them to follow the good example which is now being set to them by such men as those to whom we have alluded; or are we to remain passive, and leave these examples of disobedience to the law as are patent to all, and working all the evil such cases are sure to work in our respective dioceses? The question is a somewhat painful one, but it is still one, I think, that we cannot dismiss from our consideration . . . I think myself that we can hardly refuse to face this question, though, at the present time, we may hardly feel able to give a definite answer."

Was there ever a more pitiable confession of utter imbecility than this? If wisdom consists in perceiving and pointing out the difficulties of a position, the Bishop may fairly claim to be a wise man, but then the honour is one which he must share with multitudes of well-meaning, though not very intelligent, people. If a diagnosis of the disease alone was necessary to ensure recovery, the Church need not be without physicians. Most people are agreed that the Romanising clergy are the immediate occasion of the present disorders, but hitherto that agreement has done nothing towards providing a remedy. The mode of treatment is the crucial question, and on that the Bishop has nothing to say. It may be wise to leave the rebellious clergy alone, and let the law take its own course in relation to them, or it may be wise for Bishops to employ all their blandishments in order to win them from evil ways which may be attended with serious consequences, not only to themselves, but to the Establishment. The question is one which must be considered, but as yet the Bishops have no definite opinion in relation to it. And these are the men to whom the Church and the nation are looking up for guidance! The opinion of the country is decided enough. If the Primate had announced that the Bishops were satisfied, by long and bitter experience, that the interests of Anglican Protestantism are not safe in the hands of men who are Papists in everything except submission to the Pope, and who take advantage of every concession made to them to push their attacks on the Protes-

tantism of the country still further, and that they were resolved to free the Church from this element of mischief, there would have been a feeling of relief, not only among the best friends of the Establishment, but among Protestant Nonconformists also. No doubt such a declaration, as soon as any steps were taken to give it effect, would have produced a wide-spread commotion, and would possibly have precipitated the struggle for the continuance of the National Church. But all true Protestants would have rejoiced that the countenance of the State was no longer to be enjoyed by the party whom the rulers of the Church have described as Ritualistic conspirators. There can be only a proportionate disappointment, when a Prelate, who is known to be so anxious to satisfy the feeling of the country as the Bishop of Gloucester undoubtedly is, says in effect that he has nothing to advise. It may be said, in extenuation for him, that he knows, what those who talk loosely about putting down the offenders so conveniently ignore, that the expulsion of the Society of the Holy Cross and other abettors of the "Priest in Absolution," would not only not be an easy, but would in fact prove an utterly impossible task. But such an apology for his shilly-shally eloquence proves the folly of any trust in the Bishops, for it rests on the assumption that they have not the power, even if they had the will, to purify the Church.

But have they the will? We do not need to be assured that they dislike public scandals, and would frown upon any of the clergy who cause them. The exposure of the "Priest in Absolution" was undoubtedly a great vexation to them, if for no other reason because it furnished the children of the uncircumcised with taunts which it was impossible to answer. But of righteous indignation, such as would have fired the heart and nerved the hand of a Latimer or a Hooper,—of earnest and devout but uncompromising resolution that the evil must be crushed out at whatever cost, of vigour which would have made all the members of the Church feel that its course was guided by men who knew how to hold the helm,—there has not been a trace. Weakness, hesitation, moral cowardice, have characterised the procedure of the Episcopal Bench throughout. There are some who do not deserve this censure, but, unfortunately, with rare exceptions (we know of none except the Bishop of Durham), where there have been any signs of courage and decision it has been in the case of the High Church prelates. The Bishops of Salisbury, Lichfield, and Winchester, have not hesitated to do their best for those whose extreme action they did not venture to justify, and it might seem as though they exercised a certain restraint over their brethren of more Protestant tendencies. At all events, even with the latter, any rebuke of the offence has been comparatively mild, and has too often been tempered

with commendations of the piety of the offenders. These testimonials to character have, in truth, been pressed upon us with a pertinacity which is somewhat irritating, if it be not positively indecent. They have been a clever imitation, though in the opposite sense, of the old directions to abuse the plaintiff's counsel. The brief which the apologists for the accused have held must have been endorsed, "No case, extol the defendant's piety." The instruction has been so well carried out, that it has almost seemed as though the question was as to the character of the clergy belonging to the "Society of the Holy Cross," and not as to the lawfulness and expediency of the practices enjoined in the notorious book to which they have given their sanction. We may take all that is said on their behalf for granted, and yet condemn their conduct as ministers of the Church of England, as we might, on the other hand, refuse to adopt the high estimate of their saintliness, which is continually pressed upon us, and yet be compelled to admit that they had not violated their legal obligations as clergymen. The latter is the point at issue. Englishmen want to know whether the law sanctions the confessional in any form, and, if it does, whether there is any possibility of changing the law. The Bishops know that there is so much in the Prayer-Book in favour of the practice, that an appeal to the law against those who adopt it would be extremely doubtful, and yet that any proposals for change would shake the Establishment to its very centre. While, therefore, they condemn extremes, they are careful to suggest all that can be urged on behalf of the offenders, and, as far as possible, to palliate even their offence.

A careful study of the speeches in Convocation abundantly confirms this remark. The Primate began with a somewhat elaborate eulogy of the goodness of those, whom, nevertheless, he described as resolved "to propagate doctrines, to introduce and carry into effect practices, which are entirely alien from the spirit and teaching of the Church of England from first to last." Now if this indictment, which his Grace properly says is a "grave" one, be true, we have nothing to do with the personal character of the men, and complimentary references to it can have no effect but to impede the action of justice. The Primate is right in his conclusion, that "no admiration of any points in their character ought, I think, to make us hesitate as to whatever may appear to be our duty in the endeavour to counteract, what I feel obliged to call a conspiracy, within our body, against the doctrine, the discipline, and the practice of our Reformed Church." But if this be true, why give prominence to such points? Were there a similar body of conspirators against our constitutional liberties in Parliament, the Prime Minister of the day would certainly not speak of them in this fashion, however eminent their abilities or their virtues. Mr. Parnell is said to be a

worthy gentleman, and Mr. O'Donnell, a *litterateur* of considerable power, but Parliament simply sets itself to work to put down their disorder, without taking heed either of the manners of the one or the talents of the other. A more amiable and high-minded man than the Hon. Auberon Herbert there is not in the ranks of our aristocracy, but when he advocated Republican principles, the House took no account of his many high qualities, but howled him down in a fashion which showed that Conservatism and courtesy are not interchangeable terms. Yet the offence of Mr. Auberon Herbert, or even the impracticable obstructiveness of Irish irreconcilables, was a mild and harmless transgression, even if looked at in its worst aspect, when compared with the treason to their own Church with which the Primate charges this section of his clergy. The crime of the latter has this further aggravation, that it is working real mischief, and threatens still more, whereas in the other cases there was no reason to apprehend any serious consequences at all. Why is it, then, that these greater offenders are so gently handled, and sympathy excited on their behalf by these laudations of their personal excellence? No one has impeached their character. Why, then, this extreme eagerness in their defence? The device is not a new one. This nation was long taught to regard Charles I. as a saint and martyr, and to forget his treason against the liberties of England, because he was a faithful husband and a devotee of the Church. So now we are reminded that many of the men who are working to enslave the souls and consciences of our people are saintly in their lives and apostolic in their self-devotion and labour. The inference is not drawn, but it is obvious enough, and it is all the more necessary to guard against it because it is not plainly stated.

The peril of this kind of observation was indirectly pointed out by the Bishop of Llandaff, who suggested that curates, having themselves little knowledge of theological controversy, are unduly influenced by what they see and hear of the work of men esteemed pious and good, who are nevertheless engaged in practices "alien to the spirit and teaching" of the Anglican Church. His Lordship's view of the theological attainments of the curates is not very flattering, and does not serve to enhance our sense of the benefit which the State confers upon the parishes in which it places them as religious instructors. But there is no reason to doubt the substantial accuracy of his testimony, and, if it be true, it certainly makes the expediency of high-flown tributes to the spiritual superiority of these Ritualistic traitors (for this is what the Archbishop represents them to be) more doubtful than ever:

"I have a very strong impression that a great deal of the error in the Church of England arises from the ignorance and want of information upon theological questions that prevails among the younger branches of our

clergy. They have not taken the pains to ascertain what are the facts of the case. They see a good deal of evil around them in the world. They see a certain individual, or certain individuals, who are very zealous in a particular direction; they think that all the evils of the existing state of things are owing to this, that, or the other defect in the teaching that has hitherto prevailed, and rush immediately to the conclusion that the new course must be the right one, and that hitherto the Church has been altogether wrong. It may be so with regard to confession."

If so, what folly to give individuals who are exerting such a baneful influence still more power by insisting so earnestly upon their virtues! The ignorant young curate, who finds it so difficult to thread his way, and is so incompetent to form an opinion of his own, is hardly to be gravely censured if he concludes that they cannot be so far wrong, after all, whom his ecclesiastical superiors unite to extol as men of a peculiarly high type of piety.

More suggestive, and more ominous even than this extraordinary leniency towards individuals, is the manner in which the subject of Confession itself is treated. No Bishop attempted even to reduce the feeling against the "Priest in Absolution;" but those to whom the practice of confession is abhorrent, and who feel that Protestantism cannot be safe where it is tolerated at all, must not allow themselves to be deceived by this. The book is so bad that defence of it is impossible. It may be doubted whether even a Romanist would undertake to be its champion. The Bishop of Lichfield indicated as much when he said: "The system laid down in the books before us, and in the rules of the Society, are such as would neither be accepted by the Church of Rome, nor can possibly be accepted by the Church of England. For, although they are in minute conformity with the practices of that Church, they would not be accepted by that Church, because there is not a single mention of any overruling authority whatsoever. Everything depends on the will of the Society, and the will of the Society is to be the law." Here is an element which explains the hostility even of those Bishops who are most disposed to insist on the absolving power of the priesthood. They would have even the priests subject to Episcopal restraint; but the members of the Society take no heed of the Bishops' control at all, and their confederation enables them to set it at defiance. Their Lordships, therefore, are naturally anxious to win these recusants from a body whose indifference to their own authority is as obnoxious to them as the extremes to which they have pushed their practice of the confessional.

But when some of these guardians of the purity of our "Reformed Church" have to speak of confession itself, their tone is very different. They are quite ready to denounce the book of the Society, but there

they stop, and when we expect to hear from them a full repudiation of the assumed right of the priest, we have at best very guarded and faltering utterances, and sometimes such as tell in the opposite direction. There are two or three declarations of Episcopal opinion which deserve more notice than they have yet received. We commend them to the special attention of those who still dream of the possibility of suppressing sacerdotalism in the Establishment. The Bishop of Salisbury, who presides over a diocese which is thoroughly saturated with the High Church errors, was not behind others in condemning excesses, but he qualified his censures thus: "I differ from some of my friends as to the mode in which this thing is to be dealt with. I think it has been dealt with to-day in a grave and serious manner; but I cannot go into a crusade against confession altogether." The Primate was more outspoken, probably was more decided in his views as to confession, than most of his colleagues, yet even he desired to admit the possibility of cases in which even its more extreme practices might be extenuated or condoned if not altogether justified:

"One thing, perhaps, I should have liked to have said with regard to some of these gentlemen, that their spheres of labour are very various and some of them very peculiar. Some of them have been brought face to face with a degraded state of society which is not familiarly known to most of us. I have had a letter placed in my hands with large quotations from another letter from a prison chaplain, and the impression left on my mind is that he has been brought face to face with such atrocious forms of human sin and wickedness that he is carried away by his feelings of deep horror, and is grasping at what he thinks will be a remedy, and that his feelings are so deep that he thinks any remedy ought to be tried to meet the evil."

It may be said that the Archbishop does not actually endorse this view, but to quote such a suggestion without positive disapproval is itself an encouragement to the practice. That there are cases in which burdened spirits may find a help by pouring the tale of their frailties and sins into the ears of one for whom they have respect and trust, would be denied by no one. The question is, whether a priest is to represent himself as having any special fitness to receive such confidences, and to minister such consolation, as those who give them desire and seek. Concede that principle, and it is impossible to set any bounds to the encroachments of priestism. Yet we do not find a single Bishop who ventured in the Convocation of the Southern Province to repudiate it, and even in the Primate there seems to be a tacit assent.

The language of the Bishop of Chichester is somewhat more encouraging at first sight. He is evidently conscious of the peril of teaching the people to lean on the priest, and would have his clergy tell any who have been led to the practice of habitual confession:

"You are leaning on a crutch when you should use your own limbs, and in charity I must take it from you. You have been taking anodynes which are injurious to your spiritual health: I cannot continue this sort of medicine." But then it is only "habitual" confession that he condemns. Our objection, and that of the true Protestantism of the nation, is to confession even occasionally, if there be in it anything which savours of a recognition of special priestly functions and powers. The counsel the Bishop would give to any of his clergy who might seek his advice is thus set forth: "I should recommend that they should never cast away a single dejected soul, that they should give comfort and consolation such as the Church contemplates, but that they should never, under any circumstances, encourage anyone to get into that helpless, dependent state which habitual confession is calculated to produce." This is about as far as a Bishop could go in consistency with the teachings of the Prayer-Book, and especially with the formulary he has employed in the case of every priest whom he has ordained. Many who look at it superficially will find in it all the consolation they desire amid the difficulties with which the Church is at present surrounded. But all that it does is to discourage habitual confession. It leaves the priest free to urge the anxious soul to cast its burdens on him, and to give the penitent his ghostly aid.

But for the strongest expressions on this subject of Confession we must go to the Bishop of Lincoln. His lordship is one of the most earnest opponents of Rome, and, as his letter on the Tooth case showed, is not inclined to regard with any favour the encroachments of the Ritualists. He is able, in his usual elaborate and learned style, to expose the errors of the "Priest in Absolution," and he does it most effectively. His argument is trenchant, and would do all that is necessary if the crusade to which English Protestantism is summoned was against a book, and not against the system of which the book is one of the monstrous products. But his lordship is as zealous for the true doctrine of Absolution as taught by the Church of England, as he is earnest against Romish teaching as to the Sacrament of Penance. We believe the latter to be nothing but the fuller development of the former, and hold that if the one be admitted, there can be no security against the growth of the other. We are as anxious, therefore, about the modified doctrine of the Bishop of Lincoln as about the extreme error of the Society of the Holy Cross. In truth, the former is the more dangerous, because the less subtle of the two. While the one excites a popular fury which it is not safe to resist, the other may continue its mischievous operations without exciting hostility, and almost without attracting notice:

"And here let me observe that one of the worst consequences of such teaching and practices is this—that they produce a violent excess of reaction in the public mind, and lead many to disparage and neglect the ordinary means of grace, which Almighty God vouchsafes to penitent and faithful souls for their great comfort in His Church.

"Let me, therefore, entreat you, my dear friends, not to be carried away by popular indignation at the present time to undervalue that sober and consolatory use of 'the ministry of reconciliation,' which Holy Scripture and the primitive Church sanction, and which the Church of England commends to her children, in special cases, in the Exhortation to the Holy Communion, and in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick. Let us not forget that our best divines have recommended it, in certain circumstances and under certain conditions, and that the most celebrated foreign Reformers, Calvin, Beza, and the authors of the Augsburg, or Lutheran 'Confession,' have done the same."

This is the point which most of the Bishops have reached. They will probably object to what is called "Sacramental Confession;" they will protest against its habitual, and still more its enforced use; they will denounce those who bring into contempt not only the practice, but the Church which tolerates its use in exceptional cases; but beyond this they will not proceed. On the contrary, they will do their best to screen any but the most egregious offenders, and will rather tolerate the evil than favour an agitation which is specially dangerous, because, so far as it has any reality, it will certainly strike at much that is bound up with the very existence of the Anglican Church. They are not so much to be blamed as the system of which they are the official defenders. Some of them attach a real value to confession, and, like the Bishop of Lincoln, dread what they regard as the extreme Puritanism quite as much as the excess of Sacerdotalism, indeed, deprecate the latter mainly because of its tendency to produce the former. The Bishop of Winchester, whose condition of uncertainty and suspense is one of the most curious phenomena of the time, who is intensely anxious not to sacrifice one iota of High Church principles, but who is, nevertheless, unwilling to identify himself with their most determined and consistent exponents, gives us an admirable specimen of the perfect Episcopal equipoise: "We do not mean to give up our deep spiritual truths; we do not mean to let go Christ's Sacraments; we will not let our Liturgy be tampered with and emasculated; but neither do we mean to weave again an excessive system of ceremonies, or unduly exaggerate the primitive power of the priesthood." There is a delicious vagueness about this; but it is not difficult to read between the lines and understand what is meant. It is nothing but old Church of Englandism. He will not be madly rash, nor coolly diffident. He will keep an equal distance between Romanism and Puritanism. His idol is moderation, and he summons all who care to maintain the best of all possible Esta-

blishments, to "unite, not in one of those societies which every day widen the breaches, but in a compact central body of faithful men, who will nail their colours (that is the colours of a neutral Anglicanism) to the mast, determined that nothing shall move them to let the enemy creep in either from the right hand or the left." What this means on the crucial subject of Confession is set forth very distinctly when the Bishop says :

"But I must not be understood to condemn or undervalue the teaching of the Church of England on the other side, which by the solemn commission given on the ordination of priests, and the specimens of the use of that commission given in the offices of the Communion and Visitation of the Sick, teaches that the power of absolution (of course after confession) is a real one, and capable (under the circumstances to which the use of it ought to be confined) of ministering to the comfort and restoration of a sick soul, too feeble to lift itself up without this aid, to trust in God, the only pardoner of sin, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord."

While Bishops take this ground, it is certain that many of their clergy will still go further, and, indeed, that it will be impossible effectually to limit the development of the system. The truth is—and the sooner Englishmen understand it the better—the Prayer-Book lends more countenance to this particular feature of Ritualism than to any other. It recognises the priest, it invests him with supernatural prerogatives, it authorises him in some cases to urge the penitent to confession, it enjoins him to pronounce absolution. All the rest is but the necessary and certain fruit of this germ which is found in the Prayer-Book.

But the Bishops are resolved to oppose any such revision of the Liturgy as would get rid of the evil. More than once, in Convocation, the idea of fresh legislation was treated as absurd, and that being so, the efforts of the Prelates are necessarily directed to persuade the clergy on the one hand to exercise more self-restraint, and, on the other, to soothe the excited susceptibilities of the Protestant part of the nation. If they succeed, the Protestantism of the Establishment is sacrificed. The Bishops are excellent, well-meaning men, but Protestantism has no more dangerous enemies. Their position compels them to try and keep the peace, when our only safety lies in a resolute determination to have no truce and accept no compromise with a deadly error. The misfortune is, that there are so many who are still disposed to trust in them. They are, however, rapidly dispelling the illusion. They must believe the people to be very blind if they suppose that they will not discern the true reason of the sneers in which they are so fond of indulging at Church societies and Church newspapers (including Protestants and Romanisers in a common censure), of their earnest depre-

cation of all extremes, of their incessant appeals to the loyalty of their clergy. There is, no doubt, a large amount of mere political Churchmanship which will trust the Bishops under all circumstances; but there is a growing feeling of distrust among earnest Protestants, who would rather sacrifice the Establishment than see it become a preserve of priestcraft. The address of ninety-six peers, with the Duke of Westminster at their head, is as significant as the reply of the Archbishop was unsatisfactory. His Grace could only remind the memorialists of the declarations and resolutions of the Upper House of Convocation; but if these could have allayed their fears, the address would never have been presented. The Archbishop's answer is a tacit admission that he and his colleagues can do nothing more. Therefore the anxiety remains, and must seek relief in some other way, for it is clear that the Bishops lack either the power or the will to do anything effective for Protestantism.



ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

NOT only the Ritualists, but a large number of High Churchmen of a more moderate type, are intent on the repeal of the Public Worship Regulation Act. The intense hostility with which they regard it, is certainly out of all proportion to any results which it has as yet accomplished, for the want of care in the prosecutions has gone very far to cover, not only their promoters, but the Court in which the causes were tried, with ridicule. But even the failures which have occurred have not reconciled the High Church clergy to the Act. It has sent the iron much more deeply into their souls than was at first apparent, and it is certain that nothing short of its repeal is likely to heal their wounded spirits. If, however, they fancy that the English people are likely to accede to their demands they are in grievous error. The tendency is to more stringent legislation, not at all to the relaxation of any restraints which at present exist. We believe that in the present temper of the public mind, sweeping measures—say for the suppression of the Confessional—would be cordially welcomed by a large section of the community, although it might not be possible to overcome the strong resistance they would encounter in Parliament. Probably it would not be easy to legislate at all, but it would certainly not be possible to make any concessions to the Ritualists. There is no evidence that our astute Premier, who cares nothing for either party, and has toyed alternately with both, has any intention of suggesting a repeal of the Act, which owed its triumphant progress through the House of Commons mainly to his own declaration that it was necessary in order to put down Ritualism. Indications are all in the contrary direction, for recent appointments, such as the

Bishops of Rochester, and Sodor and Man, seem designed to conciliate the Evangelicals, whom Lord Beaconsfield may be disposed to treat with indulgence, partly because their Protestantism is popular, and partly because, strange to say, they are Philo-Turks, like himself. But even if, contrary to all probability, the Ministry were to make the blunder of proposing the removal of the Act, the suggestion would be received with a howl of indignation, which would decide, not only its fate, but that of its authors also.

Earl Nelson was wise, therefore, in contenting himself with the presentation of the monster petition for the repeal of the Act, without founding a motion upon it. The short conversation that followed was remarkable, however, because of the collision between the Primate and the Marquis of Bath. The warmest admirers of the Archbishop must concede that his manner is often extremely unfortunate, and that with all his complaisance to those who appear willing to be conciliated, he is often supercilious and scornful to those who traverse his views and are seen to be irreconcilable. He has just reason for displeasure with the Ritualists, and if he is sometimes roused to a display of it, he is not to be severely condemned. But his speech on the petition was lacking in judgment, in dignity, and in taste. The attempt to show that the petition had been "got up" was unwise, for it could only irritate. The Archbishop is a little too prone to think that he has the sympathy of all sensible people, and that any opposition to views whose moderation must ensure them general support must be factitious. He does not profit his cause by this show of unwavering faith in himself, and when he takes to lecturing peers who do not happen to agree with him, is very likely to provoke such a retort as that of the Marquis of Bath. It is a long time since a Primate was addressed in terms so caustic as those employed by the Marquis, who did not hesitate to fix on his Grace the responsibility for the excitement he professed himself so desirous to allay. Never, however, was accusation more unjust than the charge that the "Archbishop, though he was placed at the head of the Church to maintain its interests, sought rather the interests of a party and a section within it." This is indeed the last crime of which his Grace should be impeached. His one desire has been, not to advance a party, but to save the Establishment. The readiness with which he met Mr. Ridsdale's absurd request, and made himself ridiculous by assuming a dispensing power in the hope of soothing a recusant priest, ought to have screened him from the Marquis's imputation. How could he have stooped lower to maintain the peace and security of the institution he loves so well?

The sneers which some of the Bishops find a pleasure in levelling at

the Church newspapers—by which the *Church Times* and the *Rock* are understood to be chiefly intended—are not very dignified; but it must be confessed that they are too often well deserved. A collection of choice *morceaux* from these two journals would be a curiosity in polemical literature, and we are half tempted some day to make a commencement in that direction. The *Church Times* is the greatest offender against both fairness and courtesy, the most misleading in its representations, the most venomous in its attacks. There is generally a smartness even in its spite, but the marvel is that gentlemen should stoop to the kind of writing in which it does not scruple to indulge. A recent reply to some Nonconformist criticism is very far from being one of its most virulent utterances, but it is extremely characteristic, alike because of its bitterness and the specious sophistry which seeks to put a good face on an exceedingly weak argument. It is from an article on the criticisms of the Ridsdale Judgment. It is impossible to do it justice without quoting it entire :

“In conclusion, we have a remark to make upon a very large class of critics, whom we need not particularly name—we mean the Dissenting organs that have belaboured Churchmen for their resistance to the Courts. Slightly to vary the language of St. Paul, we would reply, ‘Thou that preachest obedience, dost thou obey the law?’ To hear these people talk, one would think that it was only Churchmen that came under the jurisdiction of the State in matters of religion; but there is really no difference in that respect between any one class of Her Majesty’s subjects and any other. The only law touching the matter that we are aware of is the Act of Uniformity; and this is what its preamble really says: ‘And yet notwithstanding, a great number of people in divers parts of the Realm, following their own sensuality, and living without knowledge and due fear of God, do wilfully and schismatically abstain from, and refuse to come to, the parish church, &c.’ We are not aware that this has ever been repealed, and when Dissenters tell us that we are ‘disloyal,’ they must have the goodness to remember that they are themselves not merely disloyal, but, according to the very law which they reproach us for disobeying, as they suppose, they are sensual, ignorant, and despisers of God’s commands!”

We are at a loss to say whether the audacity or the credulity of the journalist is the more remarkable, that is, whether it is most surprising that he should venture on such statements, or that he should be weak enough to fancy that other people will believe them. We are not careful to examine the exact relations of the Act of Uniformity to Nonconformists, for it is certain that Nonconformists have vindicated their right to set it aside by patient suffering and heroic struggle. If the preamble still disgraces the Statute-Book, it is there only as a memorial of the narrowness and intolerance of the very divines from whom these Ritualists claim to be descended; but, so far as it applies to Nonconformists it has been made a dead letter by subsequent legislation. Let it be shown

that the Toleration Act and others, which have carried out the principles of civil and religious freedom still more fully, have not freed Nonconformists from the pressure of one of the most unjust and persecuting statutes ever passed by the Parliament of a free nation, and we can promise the journalist that it will not be long before all doubt on the subject is ended. Do we then seek to impose a bondage upon the Ritualist clergy to which we would not submit ourselves? We must have spoken and written to little purpose, indeed, if they so misunderstand our position. We do not reproach them for disloyalty to law in matters of religion, but for their want of consistency in insisting upon spiritual freedom, while retaining the temporal distinctions and privileges which the State confers. The difference between their case and ours is too obvious to require that we should carefully define it. We would not obey the Act of Uniformity, and because of that disobedience our fathers had to suffer the loss of their rights as citizens. These we have conquered for ourselves, and they may enjoy with us the liberty which our ancestors were able to extort from theirs. But what they want to do is to retain also the exclusive privileges the law secures to Conformists. Against this we protest and shall protest. We are doing our best to overthrow the system of privilege altogether. They are seeking to retain its honours, and at the same time to evade the fulfilment of the conditions on which they are held. Of the insolent tone in which the *Church Times* addresses us we have nothing to say. It is so common and characteristic that we can only regard it as a natural product of sacerdotalism.

After this specimen of Ritualistic writing, it is fair we should give a sample also of Evangelical representations. It will read but tamely after that we have been considering, but it will amuse our readers. In its review of the Session it says: "An attempt of Alderman McArthur to confiscate the ecclesiastical endowments of the island of Ceylon was rejected by 147 votes to 121. A very narrow escape, which our Ritualistic Bishops would do well to bear in mind." Has the writer ever attempted to define that telling word "confiscate"? It sounds so unpleasant, that Church defenders are fond of hurling it at the head of Liberationists; but of all the extraordinary applications of it, this is one of the most remarkable. There are at present, to the disgrace of the Legislature, certain annual grants made for the encouragement of horse-races. If these grants were withdrawn would the owners of the "platers" who compete for the cups—which Parliament provides out of taxation, to which we contribute in common with numbers who, like ourselves, regard the racing system as one of the greatest abominations of the day—have a right to complain that

their "endowments" were "confiscated"? The cases are so far parallel, that the Ceylonese endowments are nothing more than grants made to the Episcopal Church by the Colonial Legislature, out of taxation levied upon the Heathen and Mohammedan, as well as the Christian, part of the population. Anything more absolutely indefensible or more disgraceful we do not know, even in the system of ecclesiastical endowments. But the crowning infamy of the whole is that an Evangelical organ, professing faith in Christ and His Gospel, should describe an attempt to relieve Christianity from the reproach of extorting money from unbelievers to support its teachers and agencies, as an act of "confiscation," and warn Indian Bishops that the only way of escape from the threatened catastrophe is to beware of Ritualism. A warning to all Churchmen against wrong-doing would have been more appropriate. When will Evangelicals learn that there is something more important than their party badges and distinctions, and that the Kingdom of God consists not in endowments and honours, but in "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"?

The last assembly of the Wesleyan Conference, as we have known it, has been held. The Conference will meet again, but it will be an entirely different body from the great ministerial corporation which has hitherto directed the affairs of a community which forms so important an element in English Protestantism. The "legal Conference" will, of course, retain the constitution which the Trust Deed has given to it; but the introduction of laymen into the Conference will give a new character and infuse a fresh spirit into what is really the governing body. The change may be gradual but it is certain, and we rejoice in it, because we believe that it is calculated to strengthen one of the most powerful forces on behalf of the Gospel of Christ among the masses of the people. The manner in which it has been effected is eminently creditable to those who had the reins in their hands, and who must have been more than men if they had looked favourably upon a plan which would materially curtail their power. We are not astonished at the Conservatism, so far as their own internal policy is concerned, of certain leading ministers; we are more surprised that among them there should have been found so much of wise and decided Liberalism. Though it is not to be supposed that the changes now made will be final, yet, so far as we can judge, the concessions to the laity have been made in no grudging spirit, and will give a fair opportunity for testing the effect of this very decided reform in the constitution. We believe that it will be only for good, and that among the other advantages it will secure will be that of drawing more closely the bonds of affinity between Wesleyans and other Nonconformists. While referring to this point, we are bound

to say that this end is not likely to be promoted by such speeches as some of those that were made at the reception of the Nonconformist deputation to the Bristol Conference. Mr. Glover's address was in the worst possible taste, and was in its spirit and tone an egregious misrepresentation of the feelings of those on whose behalf he professed to speak. Dr. Rigg's reply was very like himself, though it indicated an advance upon some of his previous utterances; but we venture to doubt whether the rising body of Wesleyan ministers would accept Dr. Rigg as their spokesman. It was not wonderful that, under the presidency of Dr. Pope, Dr. Rigg and Dr. Osborne should take so prominent a position in replying to Nonconformists. But it would be a great mistake to regard this, which is but a passing phase, as a sign of any permanent reaction. Events are leading the Wesleyan community onward, and we do not despair of seeing the day when they will better understand the motives of those whom they have been too ready to condemn as political Dissenters, and perceive that the root of political Dissent is a feeling as deeply and earnestly religious as their own.

BOOKS ON THE TABLE.

DR. Henry Smith and Dr. Philip Schaff, the joint-editors of the Theological and Philosophical Library, have just issued the first volume of a *History of the Creeds of Christendom*.^{*} The volume, though it contains nearly a thousand pages, is simply introductory. "It has expanded," as Dr. Schaff says in the preface, "into a doctrinal history of the Church, so far as it is embodied in public standards of faith." The great creeds of Christendom, with the confessions of the minor sects, both in the East and West, are analysed; their history is given; and there are ample references to the illustrative literature. The only two considerable works on the same subject which are accessible to the English reader are Möhler and Winer, both of which are extremely useful. Dr. Schaff's volumes (there are to be three) promise to be more useful than either. They bring the history down to the latest date, including, for instance, an account of the Vatican Council, and we are promised a collection of creeds which have never been brought together before. The present volume is really an interesting and learned history and criticism of theological thought; the volumes which are to follow will be invaluable as books of reference.

^{*} *A History of the Creeds of Christendom.* By PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price £1 1s)

Equally valuable, though in a different way, are the two volumes of Godet's *St. John*,* recently published by Messrs. Clark, of Edinburgh, in their Theological Library. We have had the first edition of Godet in use for several years, and would rather part with any other commentator on the Fourth Gospel than with him. The English translation is from the second edition, which is considerably enlarged. The other recent issues in Clark's library, are Luthardt's *St. John*, Vol. I., and Delitzsch's *Song of Solomon and Ecclesiastics*, completing the Old Testament commentaries by Keil and Delitzsch.†

Glimpses of the Inner Life of our Lord, by Dr. Blaikie,‡ is intended for devotional reading. It consists of a series of quiet meditations on our Lord's "Devotion to the Father's Work," "His Delight in His Father's Will," "His Entire Harmony with the Father," "His Temptation by the Devil," "His Life of Ministering," "His Sympathy with us," "His Sorrows," "His Peace," "His Joy," "His Prayerfulness," "His Enduring of the Cross," "His Dying Word."

In *The Land of the Pigtail*,§ issued by the Sunday-school Union, Mr. Benjamin Clarke gives a description of the life and customs of the Chinese, "from a boy's point of view." Charley Cromwell, who has just come home from his first voyage to Canton, tells his former school-fellows and some older folks what he has seen. Charley must have made an uncommonly good use of his eyes. It is a book that children will like. Another book recently published by the Union—Mr. Pask's *Apostle of the Gentiles*||—is an excellent example of a hand-book for a Bible-class. The whole get-up of the book shows that the writer knows his business perfectly. The cuts, printing, and the maps are all admirable. Mr. Wood has contributed to the volume a very interesting sketch of his recent discoveries at Ephesus. The following extract may interest our readers :—

* GODET : *Commentary on St. John's Gospel*. Vol. I.-II. LUTHARDT : *Commentary on St. John's Gospel*. Vol. I.

† DELITZSCH : *Commentary on Canticles and Ecclesiastics*. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh. (Price 10s. each volume to non-subscribers. To subscribers, four volumes annually for one guinea.)

‡ *Glimpses of the Inner Life of our Lord*. By W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D. London : Hodder & Stoughton. (Price 3s. 6d.)

§ *The Land of the Pigtail*. By BENJAMIN CLARKE, London : Sunday-school Union. (Price 3s. 6d..)

|| *The Apostle of the Gentiles*. By B. P. PASK. London : Sunday-school Union. (Price 4s.)

"The happy discovery of the Temple of Diana, described by Pliny and other ancient writers, but rendered still more interesting by the allusion to it in the Acts of the Apostles, puts at rest for ever the doubts of all who had begun to think and to argue that such a building had never existed. Years before it was found I was advised by friends to give up the search. There was no sign of it above ground, no mound to mark its site, and the vague allusions to it by ancient writers tended rather to mislead than to lead to its discovery.

"The pavement of the temple was found on the 31st of December, 1869. Five years were from that time employed in laying bare what remained of it upon its site. The major part of it had been taken for other buildings; most of the sculpture had been chopped up, and large heaps of marble chip-pings were found ready to be thrown into the lime-kilns which were found upon the spot. A large building, probably a church, had been commenced on the site several centuries after the total destruction of the temple, but an earthquake overthrew the foundations of the new building, and the work was abandoned.

"The temple proved to have been one of the largest Greek temples ever built; it was upwards of 153 feet wide and 342 feet long, and the exterior was adorned with 100 marble columns 6 feet in diameter, and nearly 60 feet in height, which were placed in two ranks round the cella walls. The whole structure was of white marble. Not a morsel of the great statue was found. The whole building was raised upon an enormous platform surrounded by fourteen marble steps. Of the 100 columns, 36 were sculptured near the base, and, as we are told by Pliny, some of them were the gifts of kings.

"In addition to the columns adorning the exterior, there is little doubt that there were two tiers of columns of smaller diameter in the vestibule and the cella. The foundations of the great altar at the east end of the cella were found undisturbed. As the temple is described as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, both the exterior and interior were doubtless adorned with sculpture of the same character as that exhibited by the fragments of the five sculptured drums which were recovered from the ruins.

"Although the temple was built entirely of beautiful white marble, there is no doubt that colour was used to heighten its brilliancy, remains of colour having been found on the majority of the fragments of architecture and sculpture which were discovered on the site. Gold was also found in one fragment, and it was probably used to a considerable extent, as at the Erechtheum at Athens, and in other ancient Greek temples.

"At the distance of thirty-one feet from the lowest step of the platform on which it was raised, the temple was surrounded on three sides by a portico, more than twenty-five feet wide, remains of which were discovered in position. The number of buildings in the immediate vicinity of the temple must have been considerable, for wherever a pit was sunk ruins of buildings were found.

"In the Elgin Room of the British Museum are exhibited three of the sculptured drums, two capitals and a base of a column, part of the sculptured frieze, part of the enriched cymatium, or uppermost moulding of the cornice, two lions' heads, some fragments of archaic sculpture in a case, and the remains of an archaic figure, probably part of a sculptured column, also some inscribed fragments from the bases of the columns. The remainder of the

antiquities are kept at present in the sheds under the portico, and these consist of fragments of two more sculptured drums, fragments of the frieze, and a great number of fragments of sculpture and architecture from the temple, the whole comprising all that was found in the excavations on the site of the temple, and all that was worth transport from the theatres.

"One day, while I was employed in clearing out the remains of the temple, the Mudir, a Turkish official, came to look on at the excavations, and seeing the immense masses of masonry, he asked me to what building they had belonged. I explained to him that the building had been a church, or mosque, devoted to the worship of a goddess, and not to the true God. 'Ah,' he said, 'I understand; they were Protestants!' We are all 'Giaours.' 'Franki' and worshippers of idols, in the eyes of the Turks.

"The Great Theatre, commonly called 'St. Paul's Theatre,' was built on the western slope of Mount Coressus; it was nearly 500 feet in diameter, and it was capable of seating between 24,000 and 25,000 persons; the orchestra was 110 feet in diameter. The stage was twenty-two feet wide, and a lofty proscenium, with two tiers of columns, completed a handsome structure. From the upper part of the auditorium there is now an open view of the sea, but the lofty proscenium probably shut this off from the Ephesians who sought amusement in the theatre; there was, however, a covered portico at the back of the theatre, and some distance higher up the mountain, from which a still more comprehensive view was visible.

"One of the most interesting inscriptions found in the excavations at Ephesus was a very long one upon the wall of one of the passages of the Great Theatre. This describes a number of gold and silver images which were devoted to Diana by a rich Roman named G. Vibius Salutaris. They were ordered to be placed in her temple, and, on certain days of assembly in the theatre, were to be carried in procession by the priests of the temple, accompanied by a staff-bearer and guards, through the Magnesian Gate. Here they were met by the young men, who assisted in carrying them thence to the theatre, when they were set up in their appointed places, in sight of all the people. After the assembly, they were to be carried back to the temple, in the same order of procession, the young men assisting in carrying them as far as the Coressian Gate.

"The images here described were gold and silver figures of Artemis (Diana), with two stags, and other emblematical figures. That portion of the inscription which enumerated the different images is very imperfect, but they appear to have numbered between twenty and thirty. The weight of each figure is given in pounds, ounces, and grains, and they varied from three to seven pounds each. Such was the magnificent votive offering of the wealthy Salutaris, reminding the Christian reader of the silver shrines of Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen, which were probably small plates of silver, with representations of the temple similar to those on the coins of the period. These shrines were very likely placed on the walls of that part of the *naos* of the temple which was railed off in rear of the altar and the statue of the goddess, in the same manner in which the Roman Catholics of the present day hang up silver hearts and pictures in grateful acknowledgment of *miraculous* cures. The date of the Salutarian inscription is from 100 to 104 A.D. The name of Trajan, as the reigning Emperor, is mentioned in one of the decrees."

The Congregationalist.

OCTOBER, 1877.

PROSPECTS OF DISESTABLISHMENT.

IN these times of political apathy, when the leaders of parties seem to be agreed that there is no enthusiasm abroad, and that the people desire nothing but to be let alone, it may seem all but absurd to consider whether we are on the eve of any great reform, and especially of our having so many aspects, and affecting such a variety of interests, as the Disestablishment of the English Church. If we are to trust the professed exponents of public opinion, nothing is more hopeless than an agitation for an object so sentimental as religious equality, and the men who venture to dissent from a conclusion which is supported by such a weight of authority are treated as a set of wild enthusiasts whom a deceived heart has led astray. Yet there are many signs that this hope is not so utterly illusive as these optimists so quietly assume. The *Church Quarterly Review* cannot be suspected of any secret alliance with the Liberation Society, considering that it speaks of the question as specially "formidable for those by whose imprudence and insubordination, or narrow-mindedness, and consequent injustice, it has been raised;" but so far from treating it as one of those dreams in which foolish visionaries may indulge, but which wiser men relegate to the discussions of Utopia, it says, in relation to Disestablishment: "By some it is looked upon as the greatest evil that could befall the nation; by some as a great benefit; by many, of both schools of thought, as inevitable; by all as an event morally possible, and far from being as improbable as it certainly was a few years ago. The mere fact that the question is so mooted—with reference not to an abstract proposition in the schools, but to a practical and possibly not remote application to the public life of the State—is too remarkable and important to

be disregarded by anyone with the faintest pretensions to patriotism or statesmanship. How comes it to pass that this great revolution is at this particular epoch so much in *ore omni populo*?" This is really the point which has to be considered, the problem that has to be solved by those who so coolly and self-complacently dismiss a subject which is occupying so many minds, which is pretty sure to be a topic of discussion in any great Liberal gathering, which, in short, so fills the air that it is not easy to secure attention for any other question of domestic politics.

The extent to which this is the case has been in some measure obscured by the amount of public interest and attention which the Eastern question has naturally attracted, especially since the outbreak of war. It is as difficult for the public mind to be strongly moved by two different subjects as it is for the heart to be possessed by two different affections at the same time; but it was not till hostilities had actually begun that there was any abatement of the eagerness with which the ecclesiastical controversy was waged, and we believe that the excitement of the sanguinary struggle in Bulgaria has caused but a temporary lull, which will be followed by a fresh and still fiercer storm as soon as there is any suspension of hostilities in the East. Even now in coffee-rooms, in clubs, in railway-carriages and omnibuses, the future of the Establishment is canvassed with an eagerness and intensity which is in striking contrast with the sublime indifference of some, or the faithless despondency of others, who regard it as a problem which may have to be faced in the future, but about which practical men need not trouble themselves seriously at present. The writer in the *Church Quarterly*, who certainly would fain have it otherwise, is evidently of a very different opinion from these sages, and there are numbers of Churchmen who are in agreement with him.

Of all people, perhaps, the Liberal leaders are those who will be most ready to pooh-pooh such an idea, since to them it must be extremely unwelcome. Whenever the subject comes to be one of such pressing and immediate importance that the Liberal party must take a decided attitude in relation to it, it is all but certain that there will be a secession from the ranks of the present Opposition. There are men who are Liberal on every point beside, who are Conservative on this. They do not see that the struggle against class privilege everywhere logically involves the sweeping away of all privilege attaching to particular religious opinions. They are ready enough to concede to Non-conformists all liberty that is compatible with the maintenance of an Established Church, but they will not admit that so long as one Church has special rights and dignities, the idea of freedom is purely chimerical. They would make the Church as comprehensive as possible, but they do not see that respect is due to those to whom the idea of a

Church without definite creed is a simple offence; nor do they seem to understand that so long as the nation is not included in a Church, that Church can be only a sect, and that to invest it with prerogatives of a national institution is merely to establish a sectarian ascendancy. We are bound to respect their conscientiousness, even while we deplore their infidelity to those Liberal principles which they are so ready to apply everywhere else. That Liberal chiefs are not willing to part with supporters who are so steady and loyal, certainly need not surprise us. We may doubt whether they are so important an element of strength as is generally supposed; but in the present condition of the party it is natural enough that those who desire its triumph, and, to say the least, do not themselves feel strongly on this particular question, even if in their hearts they are not anxious for its indefinite adjournment, are very anxious to conciliate these Erastians. We have no right to blame our leaders, but we may reasonably doubt whether their judgment is so impartial as to command our immediate acquiescence. They will probably be among the last to see that it is the wisdom of Liberals to undertake an enterprise which will demand no little courage and effort to carry it to a successful termination. With many of them, all their associations and surroundings would lead them not only to shrink from it, but to give it a most determined resistance; and with some the feeling may be so strong as to cause them to leave the party rather than engage in such an undertaking. All our calculations, indeed, must be framed on the understanding that this may be the case, although, as sacerdotalism becomes stronger, the probabilities of any true Liberals sacrificing their party for the sake of the Establishment are very seriously diminished. One thing, however, is certain—none of these hesitations on the part of Liberal leaders can prevent Disestablishment from becoming, and that before long, one of the great political questions of the day, and we can hardly believe that the more sagacious of our chiefs can fail to see it. At all events, their opponents perceive it if they do not. Mr. Hubbard a short time ago told his friends that Church questions really formed the dividing line between Liberalism, and if the leaders on the other side do not recognise this fact, they may soon find themselves in an awkward position, for Conservatism will certainly have the support of ardent Churchmen, and if they do not find a compensation in the enthusiasm of Dissenters, it is more than possible that they will be utterly stranded. That such a consideration would lead them to abandon their own convictions is as little to be desired as supposed; but we may easily conceive that they are very reluctant to be placed on the horns of such a dilemma, and are therefore predisposed to regard the whole subject as one which may safely and properly be adjourned. We do not

quarrel with their tactics, but we certainly feel justified in distrusting the value of any opinion they pronounce.

But there are some Nonconformists who take a very similar view, and are quite disposed to regard any idea of an early settlement as visionary. We are sometimes amused, sometimes half indignant, at the way in which some gentlemen, after having exposed the unscriptural nature of an Establishment, and condemned the Popish tendencies of that which exists among ourselves, proceed to damp the zeal and confidence of their hearers by assuring them that the early triumph of these views is not to be expected. They do not actually say, but they certainly suggest, that we shall have to wait till the millennium for the days of true religious equality. And so no doubt we should if they, or men of their calibre, were the only instruments to whom we could look for securing its triumphs. They are wise, earnest, devoted men, but they lack hope, and, what is more important, they lack *elan* and dash. They have the traces of that subjection to which a State Church has for centuries doomed Nonconformists. Some of them, indeed, have grown so accustomed to this submission that they seem to fancy it is the natural condition of things in this world, and that the highest of Christian virtues is the patience which bears it with meekness, or the moderation which is reluctant to use any strong words in condemning or opposing it. We venture to doubt whether they, any more than leading Liberal politicians, read the signs of the times most correctly. Among Nonconformists, those who take the sectarian view are likely to be the least hopeful, those who look at the subject in its broadest national aspects the most sanguine. If Disestablishment affected Nonconformists exclusively, or even chiefly, we should at once confess that the prospect of immediate success for those who are seeking it would not be encouraging. The only force on which Dissenters could trust would be that of justice ; and considering how prejudice and fashion, early habit and association, warp the judgments even of those who really mean to do right, it is extremely doubtful, not to speak more strongly, whether there would be any reasonable prospect of their overcoming the strong forces arrayed against them. If the controversy, therefore, is regarded as one between Church and Dissent, we are not surprised that there should be a despondent tone. It is only as men come to see that it has other and entirely different bearings, that there are Churchmen of all parties who are just as much alive as Dissenters themselves to the anomalies and difficulties of the present relations of Church and State, and still more that there are numbers who look at the whole subject from the standpoint of independent but patriotic politicians, who are becoming alarmed at the sacerdotalism which is growing with such rank and fatal luxuriance under the shadow of State protection, that they begin to

doubt whether it is possible to perpetuate the present state of things much longer. Our own observation satisfies us that there is much more of anxiety among Churchmen than there is of confidence among Nonconformists on the point, and the reason does not seem difficult to discover. Churchmen are much more alive, both to the extent and importance of the advances which have already been made towards the assertion of the principles of equality, as well as to the divisions and troubles within their own ranks, which interfere with united and energetic resistance to the enemies of Establishment. So much has been conceded that they would once have pronounced impossible, and still regard as without justification, that they are quite prepared for the surrender of the citadel of privilege, especially as many of its own defenders have begun to question whether it is worth holding.

The very significant article in the *Church Quarterly Review*, from which we have already quoted, is a very remarkable indication of this. The reviewer's sympathies would probably incline him to the Catholic school, but he does not write as one of its uncompromising and hot-headed partisans. Indeed, he leaves it doubtful whether he would himself regard Disestablishment with any favour, and the judicial tone of the article makes its representations all the more convincing. He gives us, in fact, the view of the case which presents itself to a decided Churchman, who is resolved to look at the facts as they are. There was a time, he says, when England might be considered as having the best possible type of an Establishment—"support of one form of Christianity, toleration of others." In our judgment, it is the most illogical and indefensible of any, but on that account, perhaps, it is just what would be most likely to commend itself to a nation which glories in settling every difficulty by means of a compromise, and thinks more of what is likely to work than what is theoretically sound. But all that is changed. The relations of Church and State, which Hooker defended with so much subtlety, and Burke eulogised with such glowing eloquence, have given place to an entirely different state of things. The Church, instead of being treated as "a divinely-ordained body, hallowing the State by contact with it," has been degraded into a mere department of the State, and the reviewer might have added, is so treated and defended by some who stand forward as its champions. Indeed, were it deprived of the help of the Erastians, to whom it is this and nothing more, its collapse would be certain and speedy. Still further, the abolition of church-rates and the removal of University tests have narrowed its exclusive privileges and materially altered its status, and the proposal to permit Nonconformist services in its churchyards menaces it with a still further and more serious reduction. Nor is this all, for already examples of Disestablishment have been set both in Ireland and

the colonies, while the hesitation of our prelates to ordain colonial bishops has shown that there are disadvantages as well as benefits resulting from the connection of the Church with the State, that the control is so real and vexatious as to suggest a doubt whether the patronage is worth having at the price. The situation is thus faithfully described: "We have, then, a Disestablished Colonial Church, a Disestablished Irish Church, a Scotch Presbyterian Church founded upon the disestablishment of an Episcopal Church (?) as to the future of which he is a wise man who can certainly prophesy, for it remains to be seen whether the peril can be avoided by a recent statute, or whether the Free Church will be whistled back again by the sacrifice on the part of the Establishment of the very principle the steady maintenance of which drove the Free Churchmen out of the pale of the Establishment; we have an English Church still holding by an anchor, but which has lost much of the tackle once deemed necessary for the security of her riding, and now threatened with the storms she has encountered since the Great Rebellion."

This is a statement of the case as it appears to one who, so far as we can judge, hopes and yet fears, and in whom the fears predominate over the hopes; and it would not be easy to convict it of inaccuracy. It is not marked by the exaggeration which characterises the utterances of men who are so possessed by an idea, and chafe so bitterly under the restraints which prevent them from working it out, that they are simply incompetent to form a dispassionate estimate, but rather an intelligent and impartial view—possibly influenced by a little reasonable anxiety, but by no means highly coloured—of the situation from the standpoint of one who would fain preserve an Establishment, but is not prepared to sacrifice the purity or freedom of the Church. The opinions of Churchmen of this school are of much more importance as a guide to the possibilities of the future, than those of more ardent partisans, who are already deeply committed. We know what Mr. Mackonochie feels and thinks, but we are continually told that he represents only a small and fanatical section, who are possessed by the spirit of lawlessness, and care not what comes of the most precious interests either of Church or State, provided they can work their own wicked will. We are assured that they can be treated with indifference as numerically feeble, and, in consequence of their avowed principles and aims, extremely unpopular. To a certain extent this is true. If only the extreme Ritualists, who have set themselves to restore what they are pleased to call "Catholic" doctrine and "Catholic" worship, who are bent on flaunting their vestments, and filling the air with their incense, and turning English churches into Popish mass houses, and who add to all their other offences the desire to establish the practice of the Confessional, were the only element of discontent with which

the rulers of the Establishment had to deal, there would be comparatively slight reason for apprehension. The Primate has branded them as Romanising conspirators, and as Englishmen like the idea of conspiracy as little as that of Romanism, the more thoroughly he is able to impress this conception upon the public mind, the more completely will he neutralise any influence they might otherwise exert. There is, indeed, this drawback, that until the conspiracy is crushed out, the Archbishop's own language remains a testimony to the evil at work in the Establishment and the inability of its rulers to grapple with it. But the truth is, the Ritualists are only the fraction of a great party, whose leaders may find them very inconvenient but cannot afford to repudiate them, and, in fact, are too deeply in sympathy with their fundamental ideas, and share too many of their hopes and ambitions, to separate their fortunes from those of their too ardent followers. These representatives of the old High Church party, of which the *Church Quarterly* is an organ, may regret that the difficult questions which the recent prosecutions have brought to the surface should ever have been raised, but they are not at all prepared now to have them settled in the Erastian sense. The ideas, which they have long cherished as to the right of the Church, have been rudely shattered by the Public Worship Act, and the proceedings which have been taken under it. They may have no love for the eccentricities in ritual which would bring them within the purview of the law, but the law itself is obnoxious and offensive, not so much because it may bear severely upon their more daring allies, as because it brings home to their minds the subjection of the Church to the State in a way which it has never been realised before. It may be very improbable that Lord Penzance will ever have the opportunity of asserting a power over them, but he and his court are the outward and visible sign of a bondage which frets their spirits. They have been accustomed to resent the suggestion of liberation as implying that they were at present in subjection, but they can do so no longer, for the fact that the control of the State is absolute is too patent to be denied. We do not leap to the conclusion that they will be eager to accept the assistance of those whom they have regarded as their enemies, and in the possibility of whose friendship they still find it very difficult to believe, but they begin to see that the case of those who object to the present relations of the Church and the State is much stronger than they have been accustomed to believe. There yet remains a deeply-rooted idea as to the inherent right of the Catholic Church, which prevents them from taking a full view of the situation. The claims of a divine institution, whose true forces must be purely spiritual are confounded with the privileges which the Government has bestowed and which the Government can take away. The State Church as it

exists among us has been so gradually developed, that there is room for its defenders to please themselves with all kinds of ingenious theories, and the notion of these High Churchmen is, that it holds its present honours and emoluments because it is the one branch of the Holy Catholic Church in this nation, and while this illusion continues it is not to be expected that they will acquiesce in a suggestion of Disestablishment.

But the clouds are gradually lifting, and when it is clearly seen that the two points which have been so strangely raised up are entirely independent, and that the "Catholic" inheritance, whatever it be, will not be at all diminished by the loss of State privilege, they will be better able to consider whether this privilege is not too dearly purchased. This is what is pressing upon numbers of the best minds in the Church just now. They are looking underneath the mere glitter and show which have served to dazzle so long, and to inquire as to the real advantage the Church derives from it. The presence of its Bishops in the House of Lords, and the political distinction which they enjoy, are very imposing, and they undoubtedly give a certain social position to the Church whose chief ministers have this recognised status; but while this is very flattering and pleasant to the individuals who find themselves thus elevated, and may even recommend the Church to the class who, in their religion, as in everything else, are nothing if not fashionable, the spiritual members of the Church may well doubt whether the apparent gain is not turned into a loss when in order to secure it the Church has to leave the appointment of its Bishops in the hands of the Prime Minister of the day, that is, contingent on the results of a general election. The humiliation of this arrangement has not been made so apparent of late as it once was, because Prime Ministers have felt more deeply the responsibility of their selection of men for the Episcopate. But there is no guarantee that a minister like Walpole may not again rise to power, and use his patronage for purely political ends. It is not long since a Fraser, or a Temple, or a Hampden was raised to the Bench, and an appointment as offensive to the High Church as each of these was in its time, may be made to-morrow. This sign of subjection, indeed, is felt to be more annoying than ever now that Churchmen have begun to provide funds for new bishoprics out of their own contributions. They may meet and express their desires as to the sees they wish to be created, the districts over which they should extend, and the cities from which the Bishop should derive his title, but Mr. Cross is the arbiter. It happens that Mr. Cross is a champion of the Church, though even he will not allow his action always to be guided by the wishes of the leading laity, or the clergy, or the Bishop of a district. But his successor at the Home Office may be

more difficult to deal with, and whoever may be Home Secretary practically has the power of determining whether there shall be any new Bishops, and if so, where they shall be located and how far their jurisdiction shall extend. Churchmen must be less or more than men if they did not smart under this indignity. The State will graciously allow them to contribute their money towards supplying what they hold to be a great spiritual want of the Church, but it reserves to itself the power of saying whether it shall be appropriated as they desire. There can be no new Bishop unless the State wills it, and if it consent to this addition to the officers of the Church, the appointment must be in its own hands. That is, Churchmen may pay for the new Bishop, and they are bound to obey him when he is set to rule over them, but as to the choice of him, that must be left in the hands of the man whom the constituencies have chosen to direct the affairs of the State, and who is assumed therefore to be specially competent to appoint the Bishops of the Church. As Churchmen begin to see that, so long as the Establishment exists, it is idle to complain of this, idle to envy the liberty which the humblest Nonconformist sect enjoys, there is an increasing desire for a change, even though that change should mean the inauguration of a system of perfect religious equality.

Their cry is for autonomy for the Church, and they are slow to comprehend that this is utterly incompatible with the continued existence of the Establishment in these times. It is strange, indeed, to see how many of the clergy fail to grasp the true idea of a National Church, and appear to regard it simply as a body enjoying special favour from the State, because of its orthodoxy, or its antiquity, or its historic relations, or some equally valid reasons. They ask, therefore, that its own independence shall be recognised, and also that its exclusive privileges shall be secured to it, and do not perceive how inconsistent are these demands with each other. Thus, in the amendments in the House of Lords on the Burials Bill, it was sought to compensate for the concession made to Dissenters by allowing the clergy freedom to refuse to inter even their own parishioners, and it is said, we know not with what truth, that it was because of the rejection of the amendment to give this option to the clergy that the Archbishop of York left the House, instead of voting for the resolutions of Lord Harrowby. But such a proposal proceeds upon an entire misconception of the position of the clergy. They insist that the admission of Dissenters to the grave-yards would be a step to Disestablishment, and they propose to counteract it by a procedure which virtually means a disestablishment of themselves. It would, in truth, be nothing less than to abjure the character of the religious ministers of the nation, were they thus to release themselves from the obligation to perform such an office as the interment of the

dead for any members of the nation. It is true that the nation and the Church have ceased to be identical, but it is necessary for the defenders of the Establishment to maintain the fiction if they wish to hold their position. What Dissenters are asking in the Burials Bill, is that the law should be brought into accordance with the facts, that is, that it should be distinctly recognised that the Church and the nation are not one, and that those who have ceased to belong to the Church should not be kept out of rights which belong to them as part of the nation. On their side the clergy are making the same demand, though with an entirely different end in view. They, too, would have the law acknowledge the changed state of things and conform to it, by giving them liberty to refuse the funeral rites of the Church at their discretion. What they mean is, that they shall have the honours and emoluments of the ministers of a privileged sect but still be free, and the demand is one which will not, and in truth cannot, be gratified. It is very possible that no new laws will be passed for the purpose of curbing, and, indeed, of stamping out, sacerdotalism. It may even be that the Bishops may be able to stave off any fresh prosecutions. We may not, for the present at least, have any more clergymen thrust into gaol, and no new judgment of the Privy Council may lay upon any Bishop the necessity of making himself ridiculous by assuming to exercise a power which has no existence. For a time Ritualism may hold the ground it has won, and may, when the excitement of the hour has worn off, again renew all aggressive policy. But that the Legislature will repeal the Public Worship Act, or increase the power of Convocation, or take a single step towards giving the Church autonomy, we hold to be impossible.

It remains to be seen whether a truce of this sort, on the basis of the *status quo*, can be maintained for any length of time, and if it can, whether it would be accepted by both parties. Of the position of the Evangelicals, and the difficulties which the strong Protestant feeling of the more earnest and intelligent of their laity would interpose in the way of such an arrangement, we shall speak in a future article, in which we shall endeavour fairly to estimate the strength of the forces by which the Establishment is sustained, and with as much impartiality as possible to strike a balance. Speaking now only of High Churchmen, we greatly doubt whether they would quietly satisfy themselves with any understanding of the kind. No doubt, if the hated Act, though unrepealed, was to become a dead letter; if the existence of Lord Penzance's Court was forgotten, because its powers were never put into requisition; if the Ridsdale judgment was not enforced on those who still chose to disport themselves in all the glories of sacrificial vestments; if membership in the "S. S. C." or the "C. B. S.," or any of the other confraternities whose aim is to permeate the country with Romish

doctrine, was not to be a disqualification even for the highest offices in the Church ; if the full toleration of the extreme sacerdotal party was to be manifested by the promotion of some of its leading members to the Bench—there might be a prolonged armistice. But in that case the question would come, How long would the people bear it? It is unnecessary, however, to discuss this, for in the present temper of the public mind it is perfectly certain that the conditions we have indicated will not be realised. Commotions, agitations, collisions, perils in the Courts, perils in Convocation, perils in Parliament there are sure to be. Recalcitrant clergymen and vexatious parishioners, priests who love their robes and ardent Protestants who hate them as Jeanie Geddes hated the Liturgy, will disturb each other ; the Bishops will not always be able to keep peace between them, and every fresh incident will only help to revive the bitter feeling against the law and its Court. Whether there will be found a body of clergymen who, rather than suffer all this, will run the risks of Disestablishment, we will not venture to foretell. But the Nonconformists, who would prophesy in the affirmative, are certainly those who pay the highest tribute to the clergy. The confidence of the other class in the security of the Establishment simply means that they believe that the clergy will prefer position to principle.

JOHN KELLY.

IN the roll of the leaders of Congregationalism of his day, the name of John Kelly, of Liverpool, deserves a conspicuous place—a name honoured throughout Lancashire, and honoured wherever known. There is the more need for such a notice as no biography of him is contemplated, and the small memorial which was issued shortly after his death has had but a limited circulation. It is a grateful task to help to keep alive the recollections of him in the minds of those who knew him, and to convey to those who did not some correct estimate of his life and ministry.

The events of Mr. Kelly's life of a character to be recorded are few—singularly few considering the position which he filled for nearly half a century. He was born in Edinburgh, December 1st, 1801 ; received his early education at Heriots' Hospital in that city ; and attended the ministry of Dr. Gordon, which was instrumental in his conversion. For a time he was engaged in business life, but was led, in a great measure by the expressed opinion of others that he was fitted for it, to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry. He passed through an honourable curriculum at Airedale College, Bradford, at which time the Rev. W. Vint was Principal. Two years before the expiration of his college term, the Church meeting in Bethesda Chapel, Liverpool, acting

upon the recommendation of Dr. R. W. Hamilton, of Leeds, invited him to be its minister in succession to the Rev. P. G. Charrier, who had been removed by death. The character of the congregation and the sphere of labour made this a position which it was an honour to any young man to be asked to fill. Mr. Kelly accepted this invitation, with the understanding that he should complete his curriculum at college. He entered upon the pastorate in July, 1829. From that time to October, 1873, a period of forty-four years, he continued without interruption to be the pastor of the Church. Bethesda Chapel and Crescent Chapel—the latter a much larger and handsomer edifice, which owing to the success of his ministry his congregation built, and to which they removed in 1837—were the only scenes of his stated ministry. There he gathered and maintained a congregation which, for character, intelligence, and usefulness, has ranked amongst the foremost in the denomination to which it belonged. *

How highly their minister was honoured among them was shown as well by their steady loyalty and attachment as by special demonstrations of affection, both on the completion of the twenty-first year of his pastorate in 1850, and on his retirement in 1873. That their feeling was shared by our Churches at large was proved by the honours given him. In 1857 he was Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. In 1860 he delivered the Congregational Lecture, his subject being "The Divine Covenants." He died June 12th, 1876, and was interred in the Necropolis, where rest the remains of Dr. Raffles and of many other of his oldest and warmest friends.

Mr. Kelly's personal appearance was striking and dignified. In a series of sketches of Liverpool preachers published in 1864, he was thus correctly described:—

"A man considerably past the prime of life, he still looks vigorous and hale. He is of good height, and though he stoops slightly, is of firm presence. His well-developed features are striking and full of character. A broad, high forehead, receding somewhat from the eyes upwards, but lofty at the temples; strong white hair, rising in a tuft above the front face, and brushed backwards over the ears; heavy bushy eye-brows; full eyes, sunken and heavily shaded; a prominent aquiline nose; firmly knit-lips; a square chin; and somewhat sunken cheeks, bordered by slight grey whiskers—form a countenance expressive of keen intelligence, settled purpose, strong will, and a dash of subdued and serious cynicism. A few deeply-worn lines in the forehead and the cheeks are the abiding traces of thought and care. His voice is strong, and can upon occasion be loud; but it is hard, often husky, sometimes harsh, and it appears to be capable of but few modulations or inflections of tone."

Mr. Kelly's mind was powerful, keen, logical, analytical, Doric in its strength and simplicity. He had little imagination, but great reasoning

powers. If not an original, he was an independent and vigorous thinker. It has been frequently remarked that he possessed the qualities of mind fitting him to be a judge, and that had he devoted his life to the study and practice of law, he might have risen to, and have graced, the judicial bench. In considering any question he had great facility in seizing on its essential elements, separating them from what was extraneous or subordinate, and deciding according to their real merits. His judgments and opinions were very decided. They were not formed hastily, but, when formed, he held them with relentless tenacity; and if need arose, he defended them with almost overwhelming evidence and force. He rarely receded from a position which he had once taken. As his convictions were strong and decided, so his expression of them was strong and decided. He was never afraid to speak, and emphatically too, when he thought occasion demanded it. His manner of doing this was sometimes so dogmatic and imperative as unfavourably to impress strangers, and to silence, when he did not convince, friends. It was not that he wished to overbear, but it was the positive decided element of his nature seeking unequivocal and adequate expression. This dogmatic element, amounting at times almost to sternness and contempt of men, was a great source of power in his preaching, his public life, and his ministerial and social intercourse.

Character often determines a man's, and much more a minister's, power and usefulness. In some instances it does much where mental gifts are not great, in others the want of it is not compensated by the possession of genius. In Mr. Kelly, superior intellectual gifts and acquirements were connected with high moral and spiritual excellence. He had his faults and weaknesses, but great was his goodness. His was a sanctified mind and heart, supremely set upon the glory of God and the good of man. He was eminently just and upright in all his dealings, impatient of everything sinister and doubtful, most severe in his condemnation of everything mean and base. Of strong will and resolute, he was apt to be stern and over-bearing; but under his somewhat repelling exterior he had a kind and tender heart, a heart that when touched felt deeply; and his hand was accustomed to render frequent and substantial help. I have heard persons say, there was no one to whom they would rather go when in trouble than to Mr. Kelly. He was not only the comfort, but also the strength of many a family in the darkest scenes of its life. Of Scottish extraction, he possessed many of the characteristics of—

“The dark, and true, and tender North.”

There was about him much of the clannishness peculiar to the people north of the Tweed. In general society he was reserved and taciturn:

it was only with intimate friends he was communicative, and not always with them. Occasionally he would unite in laughter and fun and enjoy them, but this was not often. His prevailing moods were earnest and serious.

Throughout the whole of his life Mr. Kelly was a close and eager student. His study was his home, his books were his delight. He once said to me that he had not been extravagant in anything but in books. Few ministers have had a larger or more valuable library. He read much, mainly theological works, then philosophy, history, and biography. He was not given largely to scientific pursuits, but everything which came in his way touching revealed truth and its interpretation he carefully examined. Speculation he was never fond of, poetry had little charm for him, and fiction, with the exception of Sir Walter Scott's works, he avoided, believing it to be a mental dissipation injurious to the mind. He worked according to system. In his reading, his studies, his preparation for public work, everything was done in due time and order: nothing was left to impulse or pressure. His preparation for preaching was always thorough and complete. From the introduction to the closing application, every sermon was fully prepared. He would have deemed it unfaithfulness to have given his congregation that which cost him nothing; he would have regarded it as presumption to leave anything to the spur of the moment. He might, and doubtless often did, expand previous thought in the delivery of his message; but the message was completely ready before he entered the pulpit. One, if not two, sermons were written fully out each week, though preached from memory without any notes; and the preparation begun in the early part of the week was usually finished on Friday. During his annual furlough, usually spent in some quiet spot in England or Wales (he was no traveller), he would carry on his studies, and would write out in full several sermons to be preached, as occasion might serve, after his return home. In all his work he was conscientious, aiming to be thorough, determined to give to the service of God the best that he could bring.

Mr. Kelly was not an author in the strict sense of that term. He published from time to time, but his works were generally lectures or sermons which he had previously delivered. His principal works were "Discourses on Holy Scripture," in which he treats such subjects as "The New Testament Canon," "The Old Testament Canon," "Inspiration," &c., published in 1850; the Congregational Lectures on "The Divine Covenants," published in 1860; and a volume of Discourses preached in the course of his ministry, published in 1867. These, with a number of single addresses and sermons on The Voluntary Controversy, on Church Life and Church Principles, and a pamphlet on the Church

Catechism, comprise the whole of the publications which issued from his pen. Occasionally he contributed articles of a religious kind to different magazines.

It was to preaching he devoted his energies, and it was in preaching that his strength lay. This was the great work of his life, and an attempt must be made to give a description and estimate of his ministry.

Mr. Kelly's general manner in the pulpit was not attractive to strangers. Some there were who, on hearing him for the first time, were powerfully and favourably impressed by the character of his ministrations; but this was not the case generally. His marked Scotch accent, which he retained to the last; his rapid utterance; the length of his discourses, which in the early part of his ministry extended to an hour and twenty minutes, and latterly to an hour; the argumentative character of his sermons, unrelieved and unenlivened by metaphor, poetry, literary quotation, historical allusion, scientific illustration, much less anecdote; the severely theological and doctrinal cast of his discourses—all these things made his ministry unattractive to those unused to long and close trains of reasoning, and accustomed to a more diffuse and emotional ministry. Still there was a naturalness and simplicity, an earnestness and power both about prayers and sermon, which left an impression even upon strangers. His own people—those who had been brought up under his ministry, and those who heard him regularly—thought there was no preacher anywhere to whom he should yield the palm. The minister must have something to say, and must know how to say it, who could preach with acceptance in the Crescent pulpit.

When thinking of his appearance and manner in preaching, the well-known portrait which Cowper has sketched in the "The Task" has frequently risen to my mind. There was not a little of the Pauline about Mr. Kelly. In the cast of his mind, in his strong, nervous, and occasionally pathetic style of reasoning, in the subjects on which he loved most to dwell, he had not a little in common with the Great Apostle of the Gentiles. One of his friends remarked, and the saying has been repeated again and again, "When Mr. Kelly gets to heaven, won't he and the Apostle Paul have a long talk!"

His verbal style was exceedingly simple. He used plain, for the most part Saxon words, and his sentences were short and sententious. His composition was careful, close, compact; but there was nothing in his diction to attract observation on its own account. All he sought for was to make himself intelligible, by conveying his thoughts in the most appropriate and adequate terms.

Mr. Kelly's ministry was eminently scriptural.—The Bible was the

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inspiration, the authority, and the substance of his preaching. He was well persuaded that it was the Word of God. Its inspiration was beyond anything else his study. He once told me that he had read every book on the subject which had been published in England. His views, whilst generally considered high, were discriminating and fully abreast of all the questions and discussions of modern times. The following statement, though not in his own words, is a statement he said he could adopt :—

“I do not hold by a verbal and literal inspiration, but I do hold all Scripture to be God’s inspired Word, and I receive and read the Bible as the Book of God in all its parts. I acknowledge God to be the Author of the Book ; not indeed that everything it contains was originally uttered by Him (for this the Bible itself tells us is not the case), nor that every part of it was originally composed under a Divine impulse, but that in preparing the books for insertion in the Canon, or for the instruction of the Church, their human authors were so guided by God’s Holy Spirit, that what they produced came forth in substance and in form exactly as God willed it to be for the good of mankind. This is the plenary inspiration I would ascribe to Scripture, and this I would ascribe to it alike in all its parts.”

Believing the Sacred Scriptures to be the Word of God, he set himself to their study and exposition, and became mighty therein. The subject of every discourse was drawn therefrom : he never travelled beyond. Public questions were rarely discussed ; passing events and questions might be glanced at, but this was all. His one great object was to declare and expound the Word of God. He did not feel the need of other subjects than it supplies ; he did not search after novelties ; he did not indulge in speculation ; sensationalism was his abomination. He believed the thoughts of God were infinitely grander than the philosophisings of human genius, however great. Like the old Hebrew prophets, he cried, “Thus saith the Lord.” This was the one ground of his faith, and the one standard of his appeal. He sought to ascertain the meaning of the inspired record by an examination of the precise terms in which it was expressed, and by a comparison of its several parts. Having ascertained the meaning, he set himself to state, unfold, vindicate, enforce, and apply it. He usually devoted a considerable space, often the first head of the discourse, to an explanation of the passage in its connection and expressions. He was accustomed to quote freely the very language of Scripture. He insisted strongly upon the importance of adhering “to the form of sound words,” in order that the truth might be preserved in its integrity, and understood correctly. He had a great dread of “handling the Word of God deceitfully.” “By manifestation of the truth he commended himself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

His preaching was largely doctrinal.—The old doctrines, now ignored by some and scoffed at by others, were with him the foundations of his faith and ministry. He loved them, loved to preach them, and was never more at home than when he was stating and defending them. The depravity of man, the sovereignty of God, the substitutionary character of the atonement, the work of the Holy Spirit, the necessity for repentance and faith, the sufficiency of Divine grace, the certainty of a final judgment, and of future eternal rewards and punishments,—these were set forth and reiterated as comprehending the truths essential to salvation. His theology was Calvinistic. In the early part of his ministry he laboured to reconcile the sovereignty of God with the free agency of man; but in later years he ceased from the attempt, not because he held these truths less firmly, but from a conviction that they were irreconcilable by the human mind, and that we must wait the revelations of a future state for their harmony to be made plain. In one of the sermons he preached on his retiring from the pastorate he said :

“Divine sovereignty and personal election unto eternal life are part of the counsel of God, to my mind, as plainly revealed as language can state them. They are not only in harmony with other truths, which nearly all recognise, but they logically spring out of them as their proper complement. They are of great practical value to the established believer amidst the dark providences, severe struggles and trying conflicts of advanced spiritual life. Their tendency is to humble him, to uphold him in difficulties, and confirm him in holiness.”

In the same discourse he said :

“The views of Divine truth with which I commenced my ministry are substantially the same with which I close. I do not say that there has been no modification. There has been some latterly, more in the direction of the old modes of stating truth. I have not been inattentive to what has been going on, but I have been dissatisfied and weary with the modern pretensions of improvement. They have seemed to me very shallow, and have resulted in concealing and mystifying rather than in explaining the truth.”

Mr. Kelly's ministry was eminently instructive.—He aimed to make it so, and spared no pains to realise his aim. The practice of exposition, common in Scotland, but comparatively rare in England, he regarded as of great importance, and constantly followed. Every Sunday morning was devoted to it. In this way a considerable portion of God's Word passed under review in the course of his ministry. His exposition was not a series of superficial remarks, shedding no light and communicating no instruction; but it was a thorough investigation of the meaning of the Scripture: difficulties were grappled with, seeming discrepancies harmonised, obscure passages elucidated, and the main current of thought and argument indicated, as well as the application of

individual passages pointed out. In his sermons there was always a great body of truth set forth and explained. He deemed it necessary to establish the truth upon which he was discoursing. Some of his hearers felt that less time might have been occupied in the establishment of the truth, and more in its application to the conscience and the life. But all acknowledged that his applications—which usually occupied the last ten minutes of the discourse—were of the very highest order for force, solemnity, and point. He laboured to build up his people in Christian knowledge and experience, and he knew that the best way to do this was to instruct them deeply in the great and momentous verities of the Divine Word. If they were not “instructed in the way of the Lord” it was not their pastor’s fault.

In the early years of his ministry, public worship was held in the morning and afternoon of each Lord’s-day. In the evening Mr. Kelly held at his own house a Bible-class for the more intelligent and cultured men in his congregation. Of this class some were members whose names have since been well known in the ministry and in the mission field, as well as in the higher walks of commercial life, and many of these testify, that valuable to them as was Mr. Kelly’s ministry, the instructions and influences they received in this Bible-class were more so. To the last Mr. Kelly himself regarded this as one of the most precious and useful portions of his ministerial labour; and he doubted whether the change from the afternoon to the evening for public worship was an advantageous one, in view of the discontinuance of this class, which that change necessitated.

Mr. Kelly’s ministry was independent and free.—It might be thought, as he adhered so closely to the old doctrines, that he did not exercise his own independent thought, but followed merely in the steps of those who had gone before. This, however, was not the case. He thought for himself on all subjects. He pursued his own investigations unfettered by human dogmas and traditions. If he walked in “the old paths” it was because those paths seemed to him in accordance with the teachings of God’s Word. He has been called “a pillar of orthodoxy;” but it was not because he took up orthodox opinions without investigation and study, but because, having embraced them as the result of these he was able to defend them with signal ability and success. He could question and discard a view held to be orthodox if he were not convinced of its truth. In the utterance of his convictions he was fearless. He was a truly brave man, fearing God but fearing none besides. No fear of man or of consequences deterred him from declaring what he deemed “the whole counsel of God.” The truth he had to declare might be unpopular, it might be contrary to the opinions of his friends, it might be likely to give offence to some of his hearers,—

it mattered not : he neither concealed it nor bated one jot of its full enunciation ; he stated it as strongly and as fearlessly when he knew it would be unpalatable as when he was sure of its acceptance. Sometimes in the conduct of different institutions and societies, of which he was a leading director or member of committee, he was compelled to dissent from the opinion of the majority. His fidelity to his own convictions was, on more than one occasion of critical interest and importance, put to a severe test in this way. But in every case he moved on in the line of his own independent convictions, unmoved by the persuasions of friends or the hostility of opponents. He might be concerned for the men whose action he felt bound to condemn, he might regret that he was separated from those with whom he was wont to be associated ; but no considerations of this kind led him to abandon the course which he deemed right. He acted according to his conscience, and left the result with the Master.

Of his own sense of independence and freedom he gave expression in his address at the public meeting which was held to celebrate his retiring from the pastorate. He said :

"In this course (that of his ministry) I have acted freely and independently, not seeking to place before you what would please, but what I believed to be true and profitable ; and I am bound in justice to you to say that no one has ever presumed to direct me as to what I should preach. I have been left without hindrance to my own conviction of duty. I state this because a very different impression exists in many quarters. The pastors of Free Churches are supposed to be the helpless slaves of the opinion of others. To them the language has been applied as expressive of their condition : 'They who live to please, must please to live.' It was thought, at the time when it was employed, a capital hit. It is strange how wofully ignorant even cultivated and otherwise well-informed men are of the subject of religion, and what blunders they commit when they talk about it."

Mr. Kelly's ministry was eminently evangelical.—This was its chief characteristic. "He was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." He gloried in nothing save the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was the sum and substance of his preaching, "Christ and Him crucified" the key-note of his ministry. He dwelt with never wearying familiarity on Christ as the Son of God, Christ the gift of God's amazing love, Christ the sinless man, Christ the perfect example, Christ the living law, Christ the great teacher ; but, above all, oftener than all, Christ the Son of God and Son of Man, crucified for the sins of mankind, the atonement, the propitiation for the sins of the world. There was something affecting, often really sublime, in the manner in which he dwelt upon this theme. His whole nature was in sympathy with it, and expanded under its influence. It was to him the supreme revelation of the Godhead, the one salvation for the world. He put it, therefore, in

the fore front of all his preaching, gave to it a place and an exaltation he gave to nothing else. Not merely did he dwell upon it more frequently than upon any other theme, but it dominated and pervaded every subject of which he treated. However far and foreign any topic might be from the Cross, he was sure before he finished to bring it to its light. And this reference was not forced, it seemed in his hands to be most natural. And from the Cross he derived the strongest motives to obedience, and consecration. The fact was that his own heart was deeply under the influence of the Cross. He had meditated often and long on the infinite atonement of the Son of God. Hence it was that on any and every subject he appealed to the Cross of Christ as the light to which it was to be viewed, and the supreme force by which it was to be swayed. Who that ever listened to him can forget how his soul warmed and dilated when he spoke of the Saviour's power and willingness to save! And it was doubtless this thoroughly evangelical spirit animating all his sermons, pervading all his preaching, shedding the sweet and hallowing influence of the Cross over all his ministry, that was the chief charm of that ministry, and the great secret of its distinguished power and usefulness.

Of the *results* of Mr. Kelly's ministry it is impossible fully to speak. They cannot be set forth. No statistics can represent them, no statements appraise them. The day of the Lord alone will declare them. To say that amidst the fluctuations and changes of a seaport town he attracted for nearly half a century a large congregation, that he was instrumental in the conversion of many, that he built up a large, united, and influential Church, that he numbered amongst his hearers a larger proportion of intelligent and cultivated persons than is usually found in even metropolitan churches; that from his Church there sprang at least four new Churches in different districts of the town, that he was the able advocate of many Christian and philanthropic societies, that he was one of the ablest supporters of the Lancashire Independent College, and rendered invaluable service in some most critical periods of its history—to say this is to say much, but it is by no means to represent the full or the highest results of his ministry. He was a teacher of men who in different scenes and Churches have since become the leaders of others, and who in character, position, and usefulness, have been the strength and ornament of Christian communities, and the spring and life of religious enterprises.

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JOSEPH SHILLITO.



GOLDEN TEXTS.*

OCTOBER 7.—“*For the bread of God is He who cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.*”—John vi. 33.

THE whole of the discourse of our Lord contained in this sixth chapter, and of which our “Golden Text” forms a single verse, arose out of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand that had just taken place. Nothing that Jesus had yet done had produced upon the people anything like the effect of this miracle. It had profoundly excited and stirred the multitude. It seemed to them a repetition of the ancient wonder of the manna, esteemed by the Jews to be the greatest miracle in the Old Testament ; at once the prophecy of Moses rose up in their minds, and they exclaimed, “This is of a truth that prophet which should come into the world.” They attempted to seize Jesus, and to “carry Him away by force and make Him a King,” and when foiled in this by His sudden departure, they would not quit the scene of the miracle, but remained there apparently throughout the night. When morning dawned and they found Jesus was not to be seen, they are still eager to find Him, and we read, “They also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.” There they find Him, and their unabated excitement shows itself in the hasty and abrupt inquiry they address to Christ, “Rabbi, when camest Thou hither ;” the Greek implying a second question, “And how is it Thou art here ?”† Our Lord’s answer, as was His wont, was directed not to the question they had asked Him, but to the inward feeling He saw underlying it : “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled ;” and then follows that profound and spiritual discourse concerning the “true Bread,” “the Bread from Heaven,” which revealed to them, and shattered as it revealed, all their carnal enthusiasm and expectations, and which ended in many of them, disappointed at the frustration of all their hopes, “going back, and walking no more with Him.”

The text, however, is unusually important, for it contains not only the

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition : these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble ; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

† Such appears to be the force of the perfect (*γέγονας*) coupled with the “when.”

completion of the answer to the implied demand of the Jews upon Christ, that if He were the Messiah He would miraculously feed them, as Moses had fed their fathers with "manna in the desert," which had been begun in the previous verse; but it is also a remarkable statement by our Lord Himself of the *marks* of the true "Bread of God," which, in contrast to the "bread that perisheth," was the true and satisfying life of the soul. I think, if we carefully ponder these words of Christ, we shall find in them all the "notes," or great distinctive marks, of the Gospel of Christ.

The "Bread of God" is, first of all, a Person. It is "HE who cometh down from Heaven;" the English translation by its introduction of the personal pronoun apparently hitting the true meaning of the Greek article in the Gospel, and so preserving for us what seems to have been a paradox in expression purposely adopted by Christ. It is as if Christ would say, that man's true life, the life of his spiritual nature, as distinct from either his mental or physical life, could only be sustained and fed in communion with a Divine Person, and that only as man partakes of the life of that Person, does he live at all.

How needful it is constantly to insist on this great and vital truth in our teaching in the present day, is manifest on every hand. We seem to have reached an intellectual position—perhaps it ought rather to be called a theological position—the exact antithesis of that held by the saints and prophets of the Old Testament times. They saw God's power, and presence, and work in all the great forces of nature—in the storm and lightning, in the wind and tempest, in the rain and dew, in the sunlight and the darkness. We, on the other hand—I am speaking of the tendencies of the age—see God nowhere. We see force, law, the uniformity of nature, instead. Whether, even philosophically, our way of looking at nature is truer than the old Hebrew method, is more than doubtful; but that it is false to the religious instincts and needs of the soul, is certain. The soul cannot live on a force or a law, however uniform and mighty; it needs a personal God and Father for its life; and to attempt to feed it with fine phrases about the greatness and order of law, is to make it cry out against us that when it asked for bread, we gave it a stone. For it, the "Bread of God" must be a Living Person. No revelation of the power behind this material universe will ever satisfy the heart of man, except it be the revelation of a person—of a Father, above all, and in all, and through all.

This was one reason for the Incarnation. Nothing but a person can reveal a person, and therefore our Lord said, "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."

Next, Christ tells us this "Bread of God," as the life of the world, is strictly a supernatural life. It is "He who cometh down from Heaven,"

words that on Christ's lips always carry with them the idea of a supernatural origin and a supernatural nature ; Christ Jesus Himself, that is, is the great supernatural fact of the Gospel. We gain nothing, in our controversy with unbelief, in attempting to minimise the supernatural element in the Gospel history. Even if it were possible to show that a number of Christ's miracles could fairly be accounted for on purely natural grounds, still the great miracle would remain—Christ Himself. It is what He was, even more than what He did, that is the wonder of every age. If every mighty work He wrought were shown to be false, still He remains greater than all His works, and more inexplicable than they, on any human hypothesis. The Christ of the Gospels, the Christ of the Church, the Christ of History, is the standing miracle of all time—a miracle on any theory ; a miracle, if only a man ; a miracle, if more than a man.

But Christ says more than this. He declares that "the Bread of God," which is the true life of the world, not only *came* down from Heaven, but continues unceasingly to come. The present tense our Lord uses—"the Bread of God is He who *cometh down* from Heaven"—is very full of meaning ; it implies that the supernatural work of the Lord Jesus Christ never ceases. It is one eternal present : He is the "Bread," not once for all given to men, but continuing to be given, just as the manna day by day fell fresh from Heaven.

We ought never to overlook this great truth. I am aware that there is a tendency to suppose that the supernatural presence and energy of Christ were confined, or nearly so, to the years of His earthly ministry, or to the miraculous history of the early Church. Nothing can be more untrue. We have the Christ of God, in all the glory of His Divine person and all the energy of His redeeming work, just as near us as He was to John, and Peter, and Paul ; and men may find as immediate access to His power and grace to-day as these Jews did when they cried, "Lord, evermore give us this Bread."

Lastly, Christ declares that the life which this "Bread of God" confers is a gift, and a gift to the "world ;" it "*giveth life* unto the world."

The Jews found it hard to believe the latter of these truths. That the Messiah would give His life to them, they had never doubted ; but that He would give it to the world, was utterly incredible to them all. That Christ should so immeasurably have transcended all the religious ideas of His own fellow-countrymen as to have dared to declare that He came to be the spiritual life not of Judæa, but of the world, is one of the inexplicable wonders of His teaching, if He was only a Jew. No mortal wing, however high it soars, can rise above the air in which it was born and on which it rests day by day. Christ did ; He had "come down from Heaven," that was why.

But if the Jews found it hard to believe that Christ would give life to the world, we do not; this is not our difficulty. Our difficulty is rather with the former part of the truth, that His life is a gift. If it were evolved by ourselves; if it were the result of natural processes; if any skill of ours could acquire its secret; if we could earn or deserve it in any way, we should be content; but to accept it as a "gift" staggers us; and such is the paradox of human nature, that from a life it would gladly receive if it could only earn it for itself, it turns away in disgust because it is a gift. But God will not have the greatness of His love thus impaired. Still, because He is the eternal Love, He proclaims to the world, "Not as the offence, so also is the free gift;" for "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ the Lord."

OCTOBER 14.—"*And did all drink of the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.*"—1 Cor. x. 4.

There can be little doubt that there is an allusion in these words to a tradition among the Jews that was well known to St. Paul, although there is no reference to it in the Old Testament. "This tradition maintained that there was a well formed out of the spring in Horeb, which gathered itself up into a rock, 'like a swarm of bees,' and followed the people for forty years, sometimes rolling of itself, sometimes carried by Miriam, and always addressed by the elders when they encamped, in the words of Numb. xxi. 17, 'Spring up, O well.' In accordance with this notion, the Rock of Moses, as pointed out by the local tradition of Mount Sinai, is not a cliff in the mountain, but a detached fragment of rock, about fifteen feet high, with twelve or more fissures on its surface, from which the water is said to have gushed out for the twelve tribes."

This was the tradition, and, as we have said, there can hardly be any doubt that St. Paul refers to it here, and uses it as an illustration of the spiritual truth that the Lord Jesus Christ was the life of His people during their wanderings in the wilderness. But the use of an illustration does not commit a man to its literal truth, nor does St. Paul's use of a rabbinical tradition commit him to a belief in its historical accuracy. Many commentators, as it appears to me, have completely forgotten this, and have consequently entirely misapprehended the Apostle's meaning. For example, Dean Alford, in his commentary on this passage, says: "It is hardly possible here, without doing violence to the words and construction, to deny that the Apostle has adopted the tradition current among the Jews, that *the rock followed* the Israelites in

* Stanley, on 1 Cor. *in loc.*

their journeyings, and gave forth water all the way." The consequence of this mistake is, that all kinds of fanciful, and many of them absurd, explanations have to be given of the text to make it intelligible at all.

It is difficult to understand how such a complete misunderstanding of St. Paul's words could have occurred, for he seems to have taken special care to warn his readers not to suppose he believed in the truth of the Jewish tradition. As Dean Stanley justly remarks, "He guards himself from any literal agreement with it; the word 'spiritual' raises our thoughts at once to the *figurative sense, in which alone it could be applied to the rock*; and the concluding words, 'but the Rock was Christ,' seem specially inserted to impress upon his readers that, whatever might be the facts of the history or tradition, the only rock which was in his mind at the moment was the Messiah, as in the case of 'Christ our passover.' *He* was, in a far higher sense than the actual cliffs of Hor or Horeb, the rock which was always in view with its shadow to protect, and its waters to refresh them; at the end, no less than at the beginning, of their long wanderings."

Interpreted thus, the text, instead of being a piece of curious and fanciful rabbinical lore, is full of spiritual teaching.

We learn, first of all, a truth of which the Old Covenant was full, and to which it gives abundant witness, although it is too commonly overlooked by us, that the Lord Jesus Christ was as truly present in the Jewish as He is in the Christian Church, quickening, upholding, guiding, and nourishing their spiritual life as He does ours. "The Angel of Jehovah," or of "the Covenant," occupies relatively as important a place in the Old Testament Scriptures, as the Lord Jesus does in the New; and Jewish, as well as Christian theologians, have acknowledged him to be the Messiah. In all the great critical moments of the history of the Jewish Church, this "Angel of Jehovah" appears as if the redemption and government of that Church were peculiarly His. He appears to Moses "from the midst of the bush;"* He gives the law on Mount Sinai to Israel; † He goes before Israel "to keep them in the way, and to bring them into the place "God had prepared" for them; ‡ He is called "the Prince of the Army of Jehovah,"§ and the prophet Isaiah, in recounting the "great goodness" God had manifested to Israel, and "the multitude of His loving-kindnesses," says: "He was their Saviour; in all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old;"|| whilst the closing prophecy of the Old Testament declares this same

* Exodus iii. 2.

† Acts vii. 38.

‡ Exodus xxiii. 20.

§ Joshua v. 13.

|| Isaiah lxiii. 8, 9.

"Angel of the Covenant" shall "suddenly come to His Temple," a prophecy that we know was fulfilled in the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. But these passages—and they might be multiplied—are interesting, not only as showing us that instead of these words of St. Paul being an isolated statement in Scripture, they are in complete accordance with the teaching of the Old Testament, but for the light they throw on the relation of the Lord Jesus Christ to the human race before His Incarnation. Here are, so to speak, pre-incarnations of Christ; here is the same interest in His Church, the same pitiful dealing with His people, the same tender and strong love to them, the same sympathy with their sorrows and trials, the same guidance in difficult places, the same deliverance from danger, that He is continually showing to them now. And as we read of Him thus following His ancient people in their long pilgrimages, satisfying their spiritual needs with Himself, the "living water," we are not only touched to think of the strange and wonderful interest He has ever taken in man, but remembering He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," we read His own words with new thankfulness and delight, as spoken to ourselves, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink."

Then, too, there is a warning for us in these words. "St. Paul tells us, "all" the Jews drank of "the same spiritual drink," and yet he adds that with "the greater part of them God was not well-pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness." Their spiritual privileges did not shield them from, but rather aggravated by their abuse, the terrible judgment of God that fell upon them. And so we learn that the highest spiritual experiences, even participation in the very life of Christ Himself, is no security for us against the sin and the punishment of apostasy from God. We may fall "after the same example of unbelief." Across the sands of the desert, and from the whitened bones that once strewn those sands, comes to us the warning—and it is the warning the inspired writer himself bids us hear—"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the Living God."

OCTOBER 21.—"*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*"—Gal. iii. 24.

This verse is part of the answer to the question that the Apostle himself has started in the 21st verse: "Is the law then against the promises of God?" To this at once St. Paul replies: "God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." But this giving of life was just what the Mosaic law could not do. It wrought death instead of life;

it condemned all men equally ; it "locked all up under sin"—for such is the true meaning of the 22nd verse, a meaning lost in the weaker rendering of our version "concluded"—"that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. "For before faith came we were held in custody under the law, shut up in ward unto the faith that was about to be revealed" (v. 23). There are two ideas involved here : first, St. Paul compares the position of all men before Christ came to prisoners locked up in a prison-house—brought under the dominion of sin, and so led to long for a deliverer from bondage and condemnation. And then this idea seems to pass into that of a child held "in ward" during his minority, and undergoing a preparatory training and discipline that are to fit him for manhood.

It is this secondary thought involved in the latter half of the 23rd verse that suggests to the Apostle the illustration he uses in our text of the law "being our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ."

But the term "schoolmaster" does not fairly or accurately represent the Greek word used by St. Paul, nor the idea that Greek word conveys. The word is *paidagogos*, and would naturally be translated "pædagogus," were it not that "pædagogus," quite as much as "schoolmaster," fails to express the meaning of the Greek word. In Greek and Roman families of any distinction there was one person, frequently a superior slave, whose special business it was to overlook the entire moral training and discipline of the child during the years of his minority. He had to watch over the child's behaviour, to restrain or to punish him when necessary, and to take the child and conduct him daily to his teacher or his school. This was the *paidagogos*. And this, says the Apostle, was the special function of the law ; it was "our *paidagogos* to bring us unto Christ."

The inferior dignity of the law as compared with the Gospel, and its disciplinary authority, are doubtless the principal points of comparison in the mind of St. Paul ; but we may further ask, In what way did the law accomplish its end of training and leading men to Christ that they "might be justified by faith" ?

First of all, the symbolical ritual of the law was part of its moral discipline "unto Christ."

The Jewish ritual was really a divine picture-book, daily exhibited to the people of Israel, and by which God was teaching them great spiritual truths. There is no way of making little children understand truth unless we express it in symbols. We don't tell our children of the Infinite and Absolute Being we worship as God : we show them a picture of Jesus instead. We don't speak to them of the abstract virtue of truthfulness : we tell them the story of Washington and his axe and the fruit-tree, instead. The early moral training of children is

almost entirely a training by means of pictures or symbols of the truth. Little by little we hope the children will learn to do without the pictures, and be trusted to the power of the truths themselves.

Very much in the same way God dealt with His people of old. They were in the childhood of the world's history, and if they were to understand spiritual truth at all, it could only be by means of a series of symbolic pictures, representing and conveying the truth. So God gave to them an elaborate ritual—priests, vestments, incense, altars, sacrifices, a local and material mercy-seat, all of them pictures, “a shadow of good things to come,” “the figures of the true,” as the Epistle to the Hebrews calls them. And just as a Jew grew out of a spiritual child into spiritual manhood, he would feel the insufficiency of these material symbols to satisfy either his conscience or his heart, and would discover that, worthless in themselves, they were full of meaning as pointing forward to and prophesying some greater and more perfect revelation of God that was yet to come. In this way “the law would be his *paidagogos* to bring him unto Christ.”

And from this we may see the folly and mistake of the “Ritualists” of the present day. They are introducing the ritual of Judaism into the worship of the Christian Church—that is, instead of being “men in understanding,” they are going back to the picture-books of childhood over again. All the concern they show for an elaborate ritual—in many of them doubtless an earnest and sincere concern—is at best nothing but a return to things that are good enough for children, but for men are “weak and beggarly elements.” It is not wonderful they should confess they have to go to the Old Testament to find any warrant for their ritual. The New Testament deals with spiritual men, and has done with ritual altogether. The Old was God's training-school for spiritual children, and to return to its symbols and pictures and ceremonial is, at best, to confess ourselves not worthy to be “men in Christ,” but Christian babies still.

Then, again, the moral effects of the law were another, and a great part, of its preparation for Christ.

It revealed sin. It had only two words on its lips, “Thou shalt,” or “Thou shalt not;” but these words at once made the conscience realise its sin. “I had not known sin,” St. Paul says, “except by the law.” It was “the candle of the Lord” shining into the darkest places of the soul, and revealing the darkness and defilement there. But, further, the law provoked to sin; for it is one of the mournful paradoxes of our moral nature that to forbid transgression becomes a new temptation to transgress. So, to quote St. Paul again, he says: “Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.” The more its severe and terrible pressure was felt,

the more the evil will of man endeavoured to break loose from its restraint, and so the law—in itself “holy, and just, and good”—became “the strength of sin.” But this was not all. Not only did the law thus reveal and intensify sin, but it was powerless to show any way of escape. On the contrary, it condemned the sinner—and to its condemnation to conscience uttered a deep “Amen”—utterly and hopelessly. Past and future alike were without hope. Nothing seemed to remain but “the bondage of corruption,” with its never-ceasing doom falling on the sinner for evermore.

And just because the law “shut up” all men in this dreary prison-house of despair, where, like prisoners “condemned already,” they were in dread anticipation of their doom, it led them to wait for and to welcome the coming of “One mighty to save,” who should “bring deliverance to the captive, and the opening of the prison-house to them that are bound.” It was their “*paidagogos* to bring them to Christ.”

Nor ought we to forget that it was not the Jew alone who passed through this terrible, but yet merciful, moral discipline of the law as preparatory to the reception of Christ. In every nation, however dark and degraded, the same moral training, though doubtless in a more imperfect form, had been going on. In some cases the “work of the law written on mens’ hearts” had led them to yearn with a passionate desire for deliverance from the conflict of good and of evil they felt continually going on in their hearts, but which they were powerless to prevent. And the discipline of the law continues still. Wherever the conscience becomes awakened to the presence and reality of sin, wherever the terrible bondage of the evil will makes itself felt, there, in all its essential significance, the moral training of the Jewish law repeats itself again. “Three great religious movements,” it has been remarked,—and those who know the inner history of those movements most intimately will know how true the remark is, “in three successive centuries” have all sprung from this “same personal experience. The first is that of Martin Luther, the second is that of John Wesley, the third is that of Thomas Chalmers.” And there is still need of the *paidagogos* to “bring men unto Christ.” To preach the Law is often a real preaching of Christ.

The spiritual insufficiency of the law was its final preparation of the soul for Christ. For it satisfied the heart as little as it did the conscience. Whilst it condemned the conscience, it starved the heart. It was a demand for love, not a revelation of love, and only the latter could satisfy the needs of man. It gave him a rule to obey, but no Father to love. And so, by revealing to man while it could not satisfy this his deepest need, it became his “*paidagogos* to bring him unto Christ.”

And yet, strange to say, it is this adoption of the sinner into the very

heart of the Fatherhood of God, through Jesus Christ, modern unbelief would fain rob him of. As if it were not enough for the priests of the Church to dethrone his manhood by leading him back to the childish ritual of the Jewish law, science, or unbelief under the name of science, is attempting to satisfy the human heart and conscience with law itself, without a God and a Father behind it all. The fatal alliance of superstition and unbelief is at last again complete, an alliance whose end is to erase from the tablets of the human soul the imperishable words, "Even so, we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of this world : but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father ! Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son ; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

OCTOBER 28.—"*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*"—Matt. v. 17.

This is one of those sayings of our Lord which exhibit what the author of "Ecce Homo" calls "His enormous personal pretensions." If Christ had only said that He had not come "to destroy the law or the prophets," He would have said what, on any other man's lips, would have been either blasphemy itself, or intolerable impertinence. Imagine John the Baptist, or one of the prophets of the Old Testament, beginning his ministry by declaring that he had no intention of destroying the ancient law of Israel ! The prophet always appealed to the law of God as the source of all his authority ; but Christ speaks as if His authority was wholly independent of the law. He seems to be looking down on the law from an elevation above it, and to speak as if He needed no higher authority for His mission than His own. Twice over He utters the words, "I am come," as if to place Himself far above all other prophets that were men "sent of God."

But the next assertion that He makes is far more astonishing : "I am not come," Jesus goes on to say, "to destroy, but to fulfil."

Now it is impossible to conceive of anyone making a more tremendous assertion about himself than this. If we take the fulfilment of the law to mean the rendering to it an absolute and faultless obedience, then this was the very last claim that a Jewish prophet or saint would ever have dreamt of making for himself. But Christ makes it. The first word, or nearly so, of His first public sermon declares Himself to be the one perfect man the world had ever seen. Christ's first assertion is His own sinlessness. He declares He had come to do

what never had been done till then, and what never has been done since, to render a full and perfect obedience to the law of God. And this, be it remembered, is the Christ, not of John, but of Matthew; not of the theology of St. Paul, but of the Sermon on the Mount.

But the fulfilment of the law meant far more than Christ's personal obedience to its precepts. Our last paper will have been sufficient to have indicated part, at any rate, of the deeper meaning of these words, by showing how Christ as "the end of the law" came to fulfil it by completing and explaining its moral and disciplinary training. In fact, the law itself is not intelligible without Christ. The Old Testament needs Him quite as much as the new.

And hence the word He uses in this place bears the meaning not only of "to fulfil," in the sense of perfectly keeping the law, but also of "to fill out," just as a painter might "fill out" in colour the rough outline of a sketch he had previously made. In this way, Christ asserted His own power and right to "fill out" the law and the prophets. And He did so. He threw new and unexpected light upon both; He took the letter of the law and expanded it into new and richer spiritual significance; He made men feel, in an age of formalism and hypocrisy, that God's commandment was "exceeding broad."

Nor must we forget the direct challenge, so to speak, these words of Christ offer to the great prophecies of the Old Testament. Christ accepts them all as divine, and then pointing to Himself declares He is their fulfilment. It was a tremendous assumption to make; an unparalleled act of self-assertion. Consider, for a moment, the number of the prophecies of the Messiah and of His kingdom which had been uttered; their succession through long intervals of time; the variety, often apparently irreconcilable in their diversity, of the personal characteristics they attributed to the Messiah—weakness and majesty, gentleness and power, sorrow and triumph, judgment and mercy, humanity and Divinity;—consider the extraordinary manifoldness of the power these prophecies assign to Him—its world-wide extent, its endurance for ever; above all, consider that great prophetic fact of sacrifice under the Jewish law, continued through many generations, coming down not only with the sanction of all that was venerable and majestic in the history of the nation, but with the sanction of God Himself;—consider all this, and then say whether it is possible to exaggerate the greatness of the assumption Jesus makes when, looking this vast array of prophecy in the face, He calmly declares He had come to fulfil it all. For the life of Christ to have done this, is a greater miracle than any recorded in the life itself.

Two practical lessons remain to be noted. These words of our Lord reveal to us the historical continuity of Christianity. It was

founded on a great and glorious past. The New Testament is the divine "development" of the Old. Therefore, to destroy Christianity it is not enough to get rid of the miracle of the Gospel history; you must also destroy the history of the long ages of the Jewish Church, for the Gospel is only the completion and fulfilment of the law and the prophets.

Then again, this may teach us the permanent authority of all the moral principles of the Jewish law. A controversy once arose as to whether the moral law of Judaism was still binding, as a law, on the Christian Church. They might as well have asked if the authority of conscience was still to be recognised by Christian men. Nothing that is moral can ever be destroyed. If Christian men do not need to be told, "Thou shalt not steal," or "Thou shalt not kill," it is not that these precepts have lost their authority, but that they have been superseded by a new law which at once contains and fulfils them. We do not need the light of the stars when the sun has risen; but the stars are shining still.

Norwich.

G. S. BARRETT.

RELIGION IN SCANDINAVIA.

SCANDINAVIA, comprising the three kingdoms of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, is not a region to which we are wont to look for earnest religious life. We think of the air as rather chill and the soil as barren in those northern latitudes. But if our readers will accompany us for a brief space, we hope to show that a warm breath of spiritual life has been blowing over those lands, and that under its influence many a goodly plant has blossomed and borne fruit.

The prevalent form of religion is Lutheranism, with its decorated altars, its copes and chasubles, and its faith in the efficacy of sacraments. At the beginning of this century the ecclesiastical machine worked on steadily, the doctrines of the creed were proclaimed from the pulpits; and if religion were a sort of charm flowing from the mouth of the priest, or imparted by the touch of his hand, then Scandinavia had been indeed a favoured land. But viewed from the Scriptural standpoint, spiritual death reigned there. Pious, evangelical pastors were not wanting, the people were not wholly neglected, but the general aspect of the Church was that of a lifeless body. Religious toleration was unknown. The Roman Catholic faith was wholly proscribed. Foreigners might worship God in their own way, but only on condition of not seeking to proselytise. Drs. Henderson and Paterson, who lived in Sweden about that time, found that any attempt on their

part to establish "Scriptural Churches among the natives," would have ensured their being sent out of the country. "We did what we could," says Dr. Paterson,* "for the conversion of sinners, but we were not allowed to baptize, or administer the Lord's Supper to the natives; they must continue members of the National Churches; have their children baptized; and receive the Sacrament from their own clergy."

Since that period many changes have transpired. The religious movements in other lands have made their influence felt in Scandinavia. Piety has assumed a more earnest and a more aggressive character. Much of the old intolerance has yielded to the spirit of the times. Even Roman Catholics have obtained a footing in the land and are diligently using their newly-acquired advantages. American and English Baptists and Methodists have established themselves in each of the three divisions of the country, and have met with considerable success, in spite of fierce opposition. In addition to all this, the National Churches themselves have been very considerably revived, and no small amount of missionary and evangelistic activity prevails. Still the principle of religious liberty has made but scanty progress. Little more than toleration is allowed to the various sects that have sprung up or been introduced from abroad. A law was recently promulgated in Sweden, permitting the formation of free congregations, but only when the consent of the King had been obtained, and when a *suitable* pastor had been chosen. But as the law does not define what suitability in a pastor is, the door is left open for endless interference on the part of the State. Again, no Dissenting Church can receive into its Sunday-school children under fifteen years of age, who belong to the State Church, except by express permission of the King.

This law, unsatisfactory though it is, shows that the rulers are slowly learning the lesson of liberty, and that even in such a quiet corner of Europe as Scandinavia, the gradual approach of a new era—the era of perfect religious freedom and equality—is beginning to be felt. Happily, education is compulsory throughout the whole region, and the people are thus in a better position than in many countries to appreciate the changes that arise, and to grapple with the momentous problems of the immediate future.

The population of the three kingdoms amounted in 1872 to nearly 8,000,000. Of these more than one-half live in Sweden, the rest being about equally divided between Norway and Denmark. Nearly all the population belong to the Lutheran Church, the whole number of Dis-

* "The Book for Every Land." By Dr. Paterson. J. Snow, London, 1858.

senters, including Roman Catholics (2,750) and Jews (6,151) not amounting to more than about 25,000.

From this general notice of the whole region, we now proceed to glance at some of the more interesting features of the religious life of each of the three kingdoms. We begin with Denmark, the smallest, but not the least important of the three. Denmark entered on a new era after the war of 1864, by which it lost the two provinces of Schleswick and Holstein. The nation felt that its very existence was threatened by the growing power and aggressive spirit of Germany, and at once began to put forth an amount of energy which is rapidly producing great changes throughout the whole land. The exports of corn, leather, and cattle are increasing every year, factories are being established, railways are being constructed, and steamers are plying from port to port. Fresh religious activity is also manifest. With the increase of wealth there is growing up a disposition on the part of many to contribute of their substance for the promotion of the Kingdom of God. The Lutheran Church continues to be the religion of the great majority of the people, but much of the stiffness that marked its proceedings in former times is giving place to a freedom of action which comports well with the newly-awakened religious wants and desires of many. Thus, the restriction that forbade the churches being used for any other purpose than the regular Sunday services, except by special permission of the bishop, has been removed, and they may now be opened at any time for week-services, and for Bible and missionary meetings. Again, the law now allows twenty families in a parish to found a *free congregation*, and to choose as their pastor a clergyman of the State Church, or a minister who has taken his degree at the University, and has been ordained by a bishop. Already ten such free congregations have been formed at the cost of the families who compose them. Here and there attempts are being made by private individuals to supply the lack of churches in the larger towns and cities. Bible readings are very common, and are numerous attended. The Home Missionary Society displays great activity, and employs about twenty colporteurs and lay-preachers; while its annual meetings, held now in one place and now in another, are attended by thousands of people. Sunday-schools, or more strictly speaking, children's services, are being organised in every direction, and in Copenhagen there are sixteen such schools, attended by 3,000 to 4,000 children of the poorer classes. A new translation of the Bible has awakened an increased desire to read the Word of God, and both the Danish Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society's agent in Denmark report increasing sales. These are hopeful signs, indicative of an awakening from the spiritual deadness that had prevailed for centuries.

Dissent has not as yet obtained much power* in the land, but increased life and movement within the ranks of the National Church are awakening a feeling of discontent in the minds of many good Churchmen—a fact which will surprise no one who remembers that the King and the Diet rule the Church, leaving the members no voice whatever in the management of its affairs. Even the bishops and pastors are all nominated by the King, nor is there any Synod or Consistory in which the Church may freely discuss its affairs. The pastors are the servants of the State, and must, therefore, be content with the position assigned them, and not call in question the wisdom of their masters in the National Assembly.] Besides the bishops and pastors are the provosts, who are nominated by the King on the recommendation of the bishop. Their business is to superintend the elementary schools, and to inspect the church premises and the manses. Together with the bishop these provosts form a *Landemode*, or kind of Diocesan Synod, which the pastors may attend, and where they may offer their opinion. These synods are sometimes consulted by the Government, but they cannot be said to have any real voice in the government of the Church.

Among the persons to whom the new life now pervading the Danish Church is largely to be ascribed may be mentioned the names of Bishop Mynster, a man of great learning and marked individuality; Bishop Martensen, well-known for his lectures on dogmatics and ethics; Bishop Grundtvig, the poet and historian; and the Rev. Dr. Kalkar, the promoter of missionary activity both at home and abroad. Bishop Grundtvig, who died in 1872 at the advanced age of eighty-seven years, was an original and powerful thinker. Many years ago he protested against the habit of always appealing to Scripture in defence of Christian truth, because everyone interprets the Word of God in his own way. He maintained that the Apostles' Creed is the true summary of Christian doctrine, and that it was delivered by our Lord Himself. These opinions gained many adherents, and gradually the Church was divided into two parties, often styled "Scripture theologians" and "Church theologians." This division led to many fruitless disputes, but it has brought into prominence the truth that Christianity is a life rather than a mere doctrine about Divine things. Much improvement has also taken place in the general style of preaching. The sermons of many ministers are a "living witness of salvation through Jesus Christ." Rationalism has its supporters among some of the younger clergy, who, however, meet with

* We extract the following from Dr. Kalkar's paper read at New York:—"Methodism, in spite of its elegant church in Copenhagen, built with American money, has no adherents. The Baptists have lost their popularity since the law enforcing baptism has been abolished, and comprise a few members, who meet in a little church in the suburbs."

but little countenance from the people. Evangelical truth maintains its position, and is exercising much influence throughout the length and breadth of the land.

The elementary schools are closely connected with the Church, and are called *Folkeskole* (people's school). They number more than 2,500. The principal subject of instruction is religion, but the other subjects common in primary schools are also taught. All children must go to school, but the average period of attendance is small compared with what it is at Zurich—627 days instead of 1,617. *Superior* instruction is given in thirteen public establishments, called Latin, or Scientific Schools: in these religion is seldom taught.

Other educational establishments, called High National Schools, have been founded in many parts of the country, chiefly by the followers of Bishop Grundtvig. Their object is to give the youth of the rural population a good education, guided by proper moral tendencies. These institutions, which are attended by the youth of both sexes, have done much good. Many have had their faith strengthened, and have acquired useful habits of observation and reflection. But in the opinion of many harm has been done, by the great importance attached to the creation of a patriotic spirit, through the teaching of the old northern sagas and popular legends, and especially by the encouragement given to some of the young men to think that after six months spent in these establishments they are qualified to be thorough missionaries or preachers.

Foreign missions suffered for many years through the Grundtvigian schism, which led many to abstain from all efforts to promote the Kingdom of God in other lands. But now all parties to whom the Gospel is a living truth take an active part in promoting the Danish Missionary Society, which has resumed its mission in the East Indies, and is now bestowing much attention on Greenland, a Danish colony, where, in the eighteenth century, Hans Egede did so noble a work. For many years after Egede's death the country was governed by a Merchant Company, who cared much more for their profits than for the spiritual welfare of the people, while the Government used to send there clergymen who had lost their character at home. But attempts are now being made to place matters on a better footing, and to provide the people with native pastors.

In Norway the same language is spoken as in Denmark, but less activity of mind prevails. The movements of Danish theology are observed with interest, and often exercise much influence on Norwegian thought. Thus *Grundtvigianism* has found an entrance into the National Church, and has done something towards softening the extreme Lutheranism formerly prevalent. The Church itself, like that

in Denmark, is completely in the hands of the State. The clergy and laity have sometimes met and tried to make their voice heard in the Diet, or Parliament, but not with much success. The State is determined to shape and direct the Church according to its own notions. The parishes are often very large, and three or four churches are sometimes under the care of one minister, so that divine worship can only be held about once a month. The clergy are, as a rule, assiduous in the visitation of the sick, but the extent of ground over which they have to travel is a great hindrance. The people are, generally speaking, of a serious turn of mind. Infidelity is not as common in Norway as in Sweden. At the beginning of this century a peasant of the name of Hans Nielsen Hauge, began to protest against the rationalism that was creeping into the land, and against the cold orthodoxy so generally preached from the pulpits. He was greatly persecuted and was often imprisoned, but many responded to his voice and became seekers after true heart-religion. They did not separate from the National Church, they even continued to accept the old Lutheran Confession, but the Scriptures were their exclusive authority. Called in those days *Haugianer*, they are now more generally known as *Ossvakter* or (the awakened ones), or *laeserer* (readers). They hold meetings among themselves for the study of God's Word, and, in Christiania, they have built a large meeting-house in one of the suburbs. This movement, in fact, pervades all classes.

Religious life in Sweden has followed much the same course as in the sister-kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, but it presents some special features worthy of notice. The Reformation-movement partook very largely of a political character, and consequently did but little for the spiritual enlightenment of the nation. The Lutheran Church was established in the sixteenth century, but it was not till 1750 that the works of Luther were translated into Swedish. The first appearance of spiritual life was due to the influence of German pietism and of the Moravians, in the middle of the eighteenth century, but this awakening did not proceed far, and it is to the early part of this century we must look for the first real change in the religious condition of the people. The Rev. George Scott, a Wesleyan minister, went over to Stockholm in 1834, and by his faithful labours many were brought to understand the truth. Then a Swedish captain, having been converted to Christ in the course of one of his voyages, returned to his country and began to preach. His efforts also were greatly blessed. A Church of the Baptist order was founded, and notwithstanding all the persecutions to which the adherents of this new doctrine were exposed, it has continued to spread. Then the translation into Swedish of the works of J. A.

James, Ryle, Vinet, Adolphe Monod, Krummacher, Barth, and others, was helpful in promoting a knowledge of salvation through a crucified Saviour; and at the present day there are many in the National Church, both pastors and people, who are active promoters of institutions and agencies for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom at home and abroad. The name "readers" is generally given to these living members of the Church. They meet frequently for mutual edification, and in certain directions, as for instance in the province of Scania, these communities have become organised Churches, exercising regular discipline. Some of the clergy, even among those who are accounted as faithful ministers, oppose this movement; but in most cases there is much sympathy between the pious clergy and these pietistic circles. As in Wirtemberg, where, as was mentioned in the article on "German Protestantism," a similar state of things has long prevailed, the "readers" do not formally separate from the National Church, but it is becoming increasingly apparent in Sweden that either the Church must, as a whole, be soon separated from the State, or there must ensue a vast exodus from the Church of all its living members. Since the labours of Moody and Sankey in this country, the zeal of many has very much increased. State-Church restrictions are felt to be bonds, from which deliverance must be obtained. As the law now stands, every member of the National Church must partake of the Lord's Supper in his own parish, and at the hands of the clergyman of the parish. To many this is becoming an intolerable law. They know that in many instances there is no sympathy between them and their parish priest, and they feel that they cannot commune in company with people who are leading openly scandalous lives, or who make no profession of attachment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides, they claim the right of celebrating the ordinances at their missionary festivals.

The whole movement has, indeed, assumed the form of a compact organisation under the name of the Evangelical Lutheran Missionary Union. The Mission-houses, as they are called, which are springing up throughout the land, are crowded whenever services are held, the parish church close by being often quite deserted. These meetings are mostly conducted by laymen, whose popular style of address has a great charm for the more uneducated classes of the nation, among whom chiefly the work proceeds.

One of the recent promoters of this revival of spiritual life is a "reader" of the name of Waldenström. About 1840 a young man, C. O. Rossenius, having studied theology at the University of Upsala, sought for ordination, but was refused on the ground that he was in intimate relations with the Methodist preacher, the Rev. G. Scott. Thus disappointed of his desire to become a clergyman, Rossenius started a journal

called *Pietisten*, which did very much to destroy the spiritual torpor so largely prevalent in the country at that period. In 1868 this useful man died, and was succeeded in his office of editor by Waldenström. Shortly after this, an "exaggerated evangelical party," as an esteemed correspondent terms it, sprang up, who would hear of nothing else but what they designated the Gospel, the law being regarded as useless. Against these erroneous notions Waldenström protested most energetically, but he seems to have gone himself to the opposite extreme. He has been accused, but we believe unjustly, of teaching Pelagian doctrines. It would seem, however, that he rejects the notion of vicarious sufferings as endured by the Saviour, and dwells almost exclusively on the love of God as revealed in the death of Christ. In his desire to oppose, and, if possible, destroy the antinomian heresy which was assuming threatening proportions, Waldenström has perhaps used expressions which in calmer moments he would have shrunk from employing. Fears have thus been awakened in many minds, naturally jealous of any departure from the old methods of stating evangelical truth; but we trust that it will be found hereafter that a noxious heresy has been checked, and that enlightened views with regard to God's way of salvation have been imparted to many, and a more healthy direction given to the whole teachings of this New Evangelical party, as it is sometimes called.

In presence of this widely-extended Home Mission enterprise, the National Church holds an increasingly difficult position. A quarter of a century since, when the Baptists were beginning to form congregations in different parts of the land, the clergy called for the execution of the law then in force against all separatists, and many and severe were the persecutions endured by those who dared to connect themselves with the Baptists. Nor did the Pietists within the fold altogether escape. But the earnest representations of the Evangelical Alliance, and especially the protests made by Frederick Monod and others at the Paris Conference of the Evangelical Alliance in 1855, did much to check this spirit of persecution, and since that time Dissenters have been tolerated and Pietists have been unmolested. Important changes have also been made in the government of the Church. When in 1865 the new constitution for the country was adopted, and the clergy as one of the four orders ceased to be represented in the Diet, it was ordained that every five years a *Landes synode* should be held, composed of thirty ministers, and thirty laymen, together with the Archbishop (Sweden is the only Protestant country on the Continent which has an Archbishop), the twelve Bishops, the chief clergyman (*Pastor primarius*) of Stockholm, and two theological professors from each of the two Universities, Upsala and Lund, as members *ex officio*. No new law relating to ecclesiastical affairs is to be passed

until the Synod has previously given its opinion upon it. But this arrangement, though indicative of some wish on the part of the Government to give the Church a voice in the management of its own affairs, yet proves how thorough is the submission in which the Church is held by the State. In other respects also, one cannot fail to see that the Church is employed by the State as a means of subserving its own purpose. The clergyman, if we may say so without offence, is a kind of superior policeman. He must take note of any change of residence among his parishioners, must confirm young persons at the age of fourteen, and must see that the people partake of the Sacrament once a year. The Church is thus reduced to the condition of a State department, and religion employed as a means of keeping order in society. Again, in the teaching of the pulpit, far too much stress is laid upon the Lutheran Confession of Faith, especially by the followers of Schartau, a High Church Professor, who at the beginning of this century maintained that the creed should form the chief subject of instruction.

Such being the condition of the Church, it cannot be accounted strange that the life that has sprung up within its bounds should have assumed somewhat singular forms. The marvel is, that the new wine has not burst the old bottles, and that the establishment has not long since disappeared. But should the present Home Mission movement continue, it must either separate itself wholly from the National Church, or this latter must give place to a living spiritual Church, a source of salvation for the nation.

The Baptists are becoming a large and influential body in Sweden, but their very existence is almost ignored by the clergy.* They do not enjoy equal civil rights with their fellow-citizens. Their marriages, if performed without the sanction of the parish priest, are illegal. Their Churches are not recognised as churches by the State, because the permission of the King has not been obtained for their formation. Yet in face of these disadvantages they are spreading through the country. At the close of 1875 they were reported to have 235 Churches (71 of which had places of worship) with a membership of 10,490 persons.† In the Sunday-schools 16,183 children were being instructed by 1,418 teachers. The entire number of pastors and evangelists is 100, about 60 of whom receive some remuneration for their services, but maintain themselves chiefly by manual toil. Sixteen Baptist Missionary Unions exist in different parts of the country, and

* At the New York Evangelical Alliance Conference, Dr. Kalkar, of Denmark, stated that "the number of Dissenters in Sweden is extremely small, about 1,900 persons, not quite one per cent."

† More recent statistics show a membership of 11,645.

it is from the small funds raised by these Unions that the evangelistic work is carried on. Thus the Sundsvall Missionary Union, with an income of less than £300, employs 30 missionaries, some of them during the whole year, and others only for a few months. The Bethel Seminary trains young men for one or five years, according to their capability, and though only established in 1866, has already sent out a goodly number of preachers who have "almost all found favour with God and the people." This institution, as well as nearly all the ministers not connected with the Missionary Unions above referred to, are supported by the American Baptist Missionary Union, but it is expected that some of the churches, especially in the north of the country, will soon become self-supporting.

The Swedish people may be characterised as on the whole a religious people, but drunkenness, and especially profanity, are sadly prevalent. To stem these evils, many efforts are being made. Teetotal and temperance movements are being promoted. Bible and Tract Societies circulate much religious literature. The annual meeting of the Christianstadt Tract Society, always held at Wannaberga, of which parish Dr. Bergmann, its president, is the minister, is an occasion of great interest. It is attended by about 3,000 persons, and in addition to discourses on matters of doctrinal and practical theology, trial sermons are delivered by candidates for the office of home missionary or colporteur.

These details may suffice to show that living Christianity has a strong hold among the simple folk in those northern latitudes, and that there, as everywhere, it is demonstrating its power by breaking through the bounds within which worldly policy or narrow ecclesiasticism would seek to confine it. With such movements we, as Congregationalists, must always feel great sympathy. The Readers are a numerous body, to be found among all classes of the community, but chiefly among the poor, and are exercising an ever-extending influence; the lay element is being largely employed in the promotion of religious truth; sacerdotalism, so rife in most Lutheran Churches, is being rapidly undermined; true spiritual and ecclesiastical freedom is making progress.

There are rocks ahead. Spiritual pride is one of these, and already some have endangered their Christian power and usefulness. The abuse of freedom is another peril, and to some minds the whole movement in Scandinavia may partake too largely of what we denominate Brethrenism. But we trust that if some few are sucked down into that maelstrom, their example may serve as a warning, and that the Church of Christ, gradually casting overboard its Lutheran and political *impedimenta*, will sail onward with majestic course through the safe and pleasant waters of a pure and scriptural Christianity.

THE BLUNT AXE.

ECCESIASTES, in one of his pithy and pregnant utterances, directs our attention to the homely and familiar fact that if a man is "cleaving wood," and the axe with which he is working is not sharpened, he must try to make up for the bluntness of his instrument by the vigour with which he wields it: "If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength; but wisdom is profitable to direct" (x. 10). It is, however, not so easy to determine what is the precise lesson which the Preacher is seeking to enforce by this homely illustration. Looking merely at the words themselves, we might suppose him to mean that it is the part of true "wisdom" not to whine over the deficiency of the instruments put into our hands—not to retire from any manifest duty because of the poverty of our abilities, but to use whatever ability we do possess with all the more energy and perseverance. And certainly this is a lesson which the illustration itself might well teach us. The bluntness of the axe is no reason for letting the tree stand, but only for throwing more force into the blow.

There are men who, because they cannot accomplish all they wish or accomplish it as speedily as they wish, are apt to relinquish altogether the task to which they have been summoned. Impatient with their hatchet, they throw it away in disgust. Having but the "one talent," they "bury it in the earth," or keep it "laid up in a napkin." If only they had the genius of this man, or the education of that man, if only they had the physical strength of some, or the wealth of others, if only, in short, they had the axe with the keen edge, they could do wonders; but such tools as *they* have, who could do anything with these? There is an old proverb, "The bad reaper never has a good hook." The careless schoolboy blots his copybook, and blames his pen. But earnest industry can make much even of poor opportunities. Probaby, if we knew all, we should find that those who have done most for our race have not been, on the whole, its most brilliantly-gifted men. Great natural endowments bring with them their own temptations. A man is tempted to trust too much in them, and to under-estimate the need for industry. It was this that led someone to define Genius as simply "a capacity for hard work." Without endorsing the paradox, we may at least affirm that many men of the most brilliant endowments have failed to do anything worthy of their powers simply for lack of application and perseverance. The plodders have often distanced them; the persistent tortoise has often passed the sleeping hare. And when men of genius have moved the world, they have generally been men of industry as well; the sharp axe has been wielded by the vigorous

arm. Even the poets of the very foremost rank have been men whose writings well deserve the name of "*works*." And as with faculty, so also with opportunity. The child who "is born," as we say, "with a silver spoon in his mouth," often grows up into a man who does little in the world besides feeding himself! Whereas he who, being thrown more upon his own resources, is led to "put forth the more strength," often becomes a much more useful member of society. Even a man who is physically weak will, if his spirit be resolute, often accomplish more real work than a man of stalwart frame. Paul had his "thorn in the flesh." Richard Baxter was a man of but feeble health. Think of Milton's blindness, and Beethoven's deafness. And amongst the "unknown and yet well known," how many have had to fight their way through obstacles and difficulties. Some of us look back to Thomas Lynch; and as we think of his brave spirit triumphing over the weakness of the flesh, of the great drops of sweat that used to fall on his Bible as he spoke to us, of his marvellous prayers, like the carol of a lark soaring into the blue, we know what can be done by spiritual courage. The world's truest heroes have not generally been men who have found the best tools ready to their hands. Many of them have been trained to "endure hardness" in the school of adversity. Say not, then, that you can do nothing worth doing in your day and generation.

"Oh . . . let us be content in work
To do the thing we can, and not presume
To fret because it's little."

The sharpest axe, if lying unused, or if used only in *dilettante* fashion, will make but little impression on the tree; whereas, even a blunt axe, if plied with resolute vigour, may by and by bring it crashing to the ground. Do your best, then, with the tools you have. Your niche may be a small one; seek to fill it well. The less faculty, the more need for industry; the less good fortune, the more need for courage; the less success, the more need for perseverance. "If the iron be blunt, put to the more strength."

Now, this lesson is indeed an important one. But when we come to look at the words of the Preacher in their connection, I hardly think that this is the special lesson which he is seeking to enforce. It would seem that the mention of the blunt axe arises out of the previous statement that "he who cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby." This, again, is itself the last of a series of four statements, all pointing in the one direction: "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it;" "Whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him;" "Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith;" "He that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby." One idea is common to these four statements—the idea, viz. that there is risk involved in these various actions. And perhaps the

strong assertions of the writer imply that what is risk of injury in the physical region becomes certainty of injury in the moral region. A man who dug a pit and then covered it over, in order to trap a wild beast, might perchance one day fall into it himself; but let a man dig a pit in order to trap his brother-man, and this wicked deed is sure to meet with its punishment. A man who broke down an old wall might perchance be stung by a serpent lurking there; but let a man violently break through the laws of morality—let him injure his neighbour by unjustly removing that neighbour's landmarks—and he is sure, sooner or later, to be stung. And so with loosening stones and cleaving wood; a man is liable to hurt himself by such work in the physical region; but let a wicked man use similar violence in the moral region, and he is sure to meet with the reward of his iniquity. If this be the meaning of the Preacher, then it fits in well with what seems to be his purpose throughout the whole context, viz. to show the superiority of wisdom to folly. He has already said that "Wisdom is better than weapons of war." He has quoted an instance illustrative of this. "There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it. Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city, yet no one remembered that same poor man. Then said I, wisdom is better than strength." Yes, although it may be the fashion of a foolish world to overlook wisdom, and to honour force more, yet still, for all that, wisdom is better than mere force; it is really mightier in the end; it is likewise more useful to a man himself, and more beneficial also to his neighbours. The Preacher goes on to say that he has seen "Folly" elevated to "great dignity;" he has seen foolish men occupying positions of authority and power. But although these men may put forth the most violent exertions in order to accomplish their ends, all their power will not save them from the injurious consequences of their actions. All wickedness—all unjust violence—is folly. The fool may be strong enough to "break through the hedge" of justice; but when the "serpent bites him," his folly is revealed. *The fool is like a man who is always cleaving wood with a blunt instrument:* he may be energetic enough in seeking to accomplish his objects, and the more foolish he is, he must "put forth the more strength," he must use the more violence; but he is engaged in very dangerous work, and, however great his strength, it would be better for him to sharpen his intelligence on the whetstone of true wisdom. Strength is all very well, but wisdom is "profitable to direct."

Thus, then, it would rather seem that the special lesson which the Preacher seeks to convey by his illustration of the blunt axe is that

true wisdom is better than mere force. "If the iron be blunt, and if he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength." Ah! "if he do not whet the edge." *That*, then, would be the best thing to do. Yes, working with a blunt axe is not very satisfactory, after all. If a man can sharpen his axe, and does not, he is foolishly wasting both time and strength. A wise mower takes his whetstone with him, as well as his scythe. But, alas! there is in the world a great deal of wasted power—of misdirected energy. A man may be industrious, vigorous, persevering, and yet be a fool. He may not have the wisdom "profitable to direct" his vigour. I have already said that some of the world's greatest benefactors have been men of energetic zeal rather than of transcendent gifts. But the very same may also be said concerning many of those who have been curses to mankind. They have been bent on accomplishing their own selfish ends; they have worked towards those ends with untiring industry; the tools of their ambition have been "blunt," and they have "put to the more strength,"—they have used their opportunities with vigour and even with violence; but oh! what a waste of power—what a foolish expenditure of energy! Such men have been mere destructives, not true builders; they have been like those of whom the Psalmist speaks, who "lifted up their axes to break down the carved work" in the Temple of the Lord. And the issue has shown the folly of their misdirected zeal; their wood-cleaving has been dangerous work; cursing the world, they have also in the end brought a curse upon themselves. Oh, how much better if all this energy had been rightly directed—if all such men had only been as truly wise as they were resolutely strong!

Wisdom, then, is better than mere force, and is "profitable to direct" force. Even in the physical region this is abundantly manifest. The discoveries of human wisdom have wondrously lessened the strain on human strength. A blast of gunpowder will do in a few seconds what it would take a prolonged expenditure of muscular force to accomplish. We should not consider it a very wise thing to dispense with lever and pulley and wedge, and simply "put to the more strength." And a man who wields an axe—which is just a kind of wedge—will surely, when it is blunt, sharpen it if he can. He may not lack vigour, but neither does he wish to waste his vigour; and he knows that with the sharp axe the same amount of vigour will accomplish much more work.

And yet, in other regions, we often find men "putting to the more strength," when they ought rather to be whetting their tools! They rush forward with a blind energy, when they might just as well open their eyes. And sometimes they try to make mere force do the work of wisdom. Goldsmith used to say of Dr. Johnson, that "when his gun missed fire, he knocked you down with the butt-end!" And some-

times a public speaker, when he is conscious that his logic is not very incisive, will try to make up for the defect by the energy of his rhetoric. He supplements the poverty of his argument by the violence of his denunciations. "The iron is blunt," and so "he puts to the more strength." Yes; but it would be far better to give a keener edge to his reasonings. Sometimes, again, you may see a parent scolding a naughty child with loud and vehement words, or punishing a child with heavy and passionate blows, and all, too, with but little effect. Ah! the parental influence is "blunt" and dull, and so the father is "putting to the more strength;" yes, and only blunting the instrument more and more! Would it not be far better to give a finer and more delicate edge to his parental influence? Or, again, you will sometimes see an ambitious man forcing his way to a position of prominence to which he is not at all entitled—elbowing out of the road men who are more able, but also more modest—and thrusting himself to the front by dint of sheer self-assertion. "The iron is blunt," and so he "puts to the more strength." Yes, but he would meanwhile be far better employed in whetting his powers for usefulness, and making himself worthier of esteem and confidence. Or yet again, you will sometimes see a man working away with impaired physical health, when he might and ought to be recruiting himself for more effective labour. I have already referred to men who have accomplished a great amount of work in spite of much bodily weakness. But there are also men who might really do more work, if only they would take more rest. They are resolutely and persistently toiling away with a blunt axe, and making it blunter, when they ought to be sharpening it. A few months' rest, taken in time, might whet their physical powers, and be a wondrous saving in the end both of time and energy. Some men do not believe enough in work; but there are others who do not believe enough in relaxation. God has made us for activity; and yet—say rather *and therefore*—He has ordained that we shall give about a third of our whole lifetime to sleep! The "gospel of work" has been over-preached in our day. Even spiritual work is better done by those who, now and again, go "apart into a desert place and rest awhile."

Despise not, then, the sharp axe. "If the iron be blunt," and if there be no help for it, then "put to the more strength;" but if you can whet the edge be wise enough to do so. If your opportunities, your abilities, your influence, be but feeble, then use them with all the more industry, vigour, and perseverance. But, if you can sharpen your powers, if you can increase your opportunities of usefulness, if you can give yourself better tools, be not so foolish as to work on with inferior instruments. By all means cultivate energy; but, above all, cultivate wisdom. Wisdom is the grand whetstone. Wisdom makes all our powers—such

as they are—effective for the highest ends. “Wisdom is better than strength,” and is “profitable to direct” strength.

But let us remember what kind of “wisdom” it is that Ecclesiastes has more especially in view. It is the wisdom of godliness and goodness—that heavenly, yet most practical, wisdom which “begins” with “the fear of the Lord.” It is indeed well to store our minds with knowledge; it is even well, in a world like this, to have “the wisdom of the serpent,” if only it be blended with “the simplicity of the dove.” But, however learned, skilful, or shrewd a man may be, he is, nevertheless, a fool, if he be ungodly and wicked. For he is scheming and working against the righteous order of the universe; and, therefore, sooner or later, all his energy and cunning must come to nought. A strong will can do wonders; but he must surely be a foolish man who fights against the Almighty. And even a Christian, in fighting against sin, may often find himself vanquished if he trusts to mere force of will. But if, by prayer and communion with Christ, he has given a keen edge to his spiritual nature, he may find himself cleaving his way easily through temptations which might otherwise have proved too strong for all his strength. Godliness imparts to a man a high aim—inspires him with spiritual vigour—and gives a true “direction” to all his energies. It is the way of “the world” to “wonder after the Beast”—to worship brute force, or even intellectual might—to admire the mere “putting to of strength;” but, after all, it is the heavenly wisdom, with its keen-edged powers, that accomplishes the noblest and most enduring work.

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T. C. FINLAYSON.

THE CRISIS IN FRANCE.

THE *Times*, a day or two after M. Thiers' death, insisted on the comparative indifference with which the tidings of an event which might be expected to have a very important influence on the future not only of France but of Europe, had been received in this country, as a symptom of the general political apathy which prevails. How the leading journal had been able to ascertain the state of feeling which had been produced by an event which had only just become generally known at the time when the article was written, might present some little difficulty to any but those who are accustomed to believe absolutely in the leading journal, and who bow to that assumption of infallibility which is so often mistaken for superior knowledge. The *Times* was equally certain of the disastrous influence which the loss of M. Thiers must exert on the fortunes of the Republican party in France, as it was of the utter indifference of Englishmen to the “heavy blow and great discourage-

ment" which had thus fallen upon the cause of freedom; and it might have been as mistaken in the one as in the other. Wholesale statements of this kind, for which there can be no sufficient evidence, are the weakness of journalism, and they are all the worse when they are made, as in the case before us, the main support of an elaborate argument as to the political sentiment of the nation. In what way the English people were to have shown their feeling relative to the death of a veteran statesman of eighty years of age is hardly apparent, except to those who have the extraordinary wisdom of leader writers in the *Times*. But even had there been some obvious method of giving expression to sympathy with a party bereft of a leader whose name was to it a tower of strength, September was scarcely the month in which it could easily have been employed. The fundamental idea of the representation given by the *Times* is simply ludicrous. Its object was to show that the nation cares for nothing but the Eastern Question, and one of its principal proofs was that M. Thiers had died two or three days before, and there had been no demonstration of public feeling. From that the conclusion was easy that the country is utterly apathetic on all subjects, either of home or foreign politics, from Disestablishment downwards. Lord Derby was extremely glad a short time after to take up the strain, and insist that there was no "burning question," and that no one was more to be pitied than the man who tried to get up an agitation at present. And the one fact which, with the *Times* at least, forms the basis of this rather extensive superstructure is, the absence of any immediate excitement about the death of M. Thiers. Yet his death could scarcely be thought surprising, and it may be doubted whether it would ever have produced a very strong feeling in a country where M. Thiers' anti-English and Protectionist policy is not forgotten. Besides, it took place at a time of year when only the most sensational events produce any strong impression. Not even the Eastern Question would have been an exception to this rule but for the excitement of the fearful struggle which is going on in Bulgaria. The fact is, the country has been, and is, apathetic because it is holiday-time, and there are "burning questions" enough which lie at the very surface, and are pretty sure to create more or less excitement, when the normal period of political activity returns.

The *Times*, however, is so far right that Englishmen care far too little about the politics of France. The chief reason is that they know so little, and, with the strong insular complacency of which foreigners so justly complain, are rather proud than ashamed of their ignorance. There has been a marked improvement in this respect, but still it is only a minority, and a comparatively small one, who have any intelligent acquaintance with the nature of the struggle into which the people of that

unhappy country have been plunged by the ambition and folly of an incompetent ruler, and the unprincipled Ministers by whom he is surrounded. Even with those who have a general conception of the bearings of the conflict, there are many who have not gone so deeply into it and are not so familiar with its history, as fully to appreciate its religious and ecclesiastical, as well as political significance. But ignorance is not the sole cause of the indifference. There are many good Englishmen, and even Liberals, who do not allow their political sympathies to go beyond those who are contending for liberty under a constitutional monarchy, and there are, we also fear, a number of true Protestants who do not understand that all who are contending against Clericalism are up to a certain point their allies. Now the French Liberals are Republicans, even those who, like M. Thiers himself, have personal preferences for a monarchy, having been compelled by events to give their adhesion to a Republic, and, alas ! only too many of them are sceptics, not to say atheists. Hence their cause excites less enthusiasm than it ought to command among those who having inherited liberty themselves, and learned its priceless value, ought to watch with intensest interest the course of others who are fighting a battle as well-nigh as difficult, and with issues as momentous, as that which their forefathers won for them centuries ago. The indifference of which we speak is, indeed, as impolitic and short-sighted as it is strangely ungenerous. France cannot be isolated. Her position, the active intelligence of the people, the extent to which her thought influences other peoples, all combine to invest the contest of parties within her with peculiar importance. Perhaps on no country is the effect of her changes of opinions more direct and powerful than on our own. Her great political revolutions have generally been followed by upheavals among ourselves ; the excesses of the professed champions of liberty (such as the Terrorists of 1792 and the Communists of 1871) have been among the most serious hindrances to progress in this country ; and, on the other hand, the successes of a sound and rational Liberalism on the other side of the Channel have always told happily on this. What would be the immediate consequences of a victory of the Reactionaries in France at present, it would not be quite safe to predict, although, we believe, that as a rule the excesses of Toryism must have the same tendency as those of Radicalism, and tell to the injury of the party on whose behalf they are committed. But it is certain that the defeat of Clericalism in a country over which it is specially anxious to restore its old and hated dominion, would be an immense gain to the cause of freedom and Protestant truth. It is this aspect of it which gives it a peculiar interest to us, and induces us to try and engage the sympathy of our readers for those who, much as we must differ from many of their opinions,

are engaged in a fight on whose issues the spiritual and religious future of the Continent of Europe must be largely dependent.

That the "Clericals" were the real instigators of the move of the 16th May—when Marshal Macmahon showed either a singular weakness of intellect, or a rooted disloyalty to the constitution which had made him President of France—is not doubted by those who know most of the secret history of the affair. In the best-informed circles of Paris it is believed that even the politicians who profited by the dismissal of M. Jules Simon knew nothing of the Marshal's intention until it had been carried into execution. The Confessor did it all. The Ministry had added to all other offences the crowning one of opposition to clerical interests. That France was peaceful and content, that the industry and thrift of her people were enabling her rapidly to repair the losses incurred by the last freak of clerical passion, that even political feuds were losing something of their old bitterness, were points of no importance to the priests. Priests live, scheme, and work for their order rather than their country. They are priests first, patriots afterwards, even in Churches where the love of country is not an extinguished sentiment. But in a great hierarchy like that of the Papal Church, where Rome is the centre to which all passion and loyalty converge, the priest is absorbed in the pursuit of what he is pleased to describe as the interests of religion, that is, in the aggrandisement of his own order. M. Jules Simon might be a moderate Liberal, anxious to govern only on constitutional principles, doing his best to steer the vessel of State amid circumstances of extreme difficulty, even exposing himself to the criticism and censures of the more advanced partisans on his own side in his care to avoid whatever was likely to produce disorder. But he was known to be an opponent of the priests, and the *régime* of which he was the representative was conducted on principles directly hostile to all the ideas and aims of Clericalism. Hence the hatred which we are told was the moving cause of the reactionary procedure of the Marshal.

There is certainly a good deal to lend probability to such a view. The question of "Cui bono?" is the first to suggest itself in considering so extraordinary an action. And to this, one answer may be confidently returned. Whether it would be Imperialists, or Legitimists, or Orleanists who would profit by the success of the unprincipled coalition into which they have entered may be doubtful, but if victory could be achieved the priests must be the gainers, and they are the only party of which this can be said with any approach to certainty. If any of the three Royalist parties who are abusing the forms of the Republic in order to effect its overthrow had planned the campaign, it may reasonably be argued that it would have taken measures to secure its own special ends. But there was nothing of the kind, and to this may be traced the bickerings

and misunderstandings which burst out as soon as the coalition had to develop a positive policy. So long as they were dealing only with the negative side, its members were unanimous, for all hated the Republic with perfect hatred and counted its friends their enemies. The whole aspect of affairs was changed when they had to decide what to do. Then it was seen that they hated one another almost as much as the common foe. The Clericals, however, could regard them all with impartiality, leaving all who would undertake the task to get the chestnuts out of the fire, because they had the undisturbed assurance that the worker would be their tool, and that the reward of success would fall to the Church. It is a new illustration of the old saying that all roads lead to Rome.

Though, however, priestly ambition be regarded as the "*fons et origo mali*," this does not at all lessen the responsibility of the Marshal-President for the course of lawlessness, thinly disguised under constitutional forms, which has been pursued since last May. He may have yielded to influences which have been set at work by Jesuit priests in the Confessional; but he is not to be judged as though he were a mere child, or even a *roi fainéant*, incapable of forming an opinion of his own and acting upon it. He has been judged too leniently all through, and others have been made scapegoats to bear the condemnation which fairly belongs to him. Posterity will estimate more correctly the faults of one who has allowed himself to play the game of natures probably not more ambitious but stronger than his own. No despot ever suffered more exalted theories of prerogative to be set up and enforced in his name; and yet he is only the creation of an Assembly which had neither legal nor moral right to give him the power which he holds. Had he been a high-minded man it would be impossible for him to cling to the position which he occupies, after the country had in the only way open to it expressed its disapproval of his election. The Assembly of 1871 was only a provisional body, chosen for a particular purpose and in honour bound to dissolve itself after that purpose had been secured, without the faintest title to give the country a new constitution, much less to impose upon it a new ruler. The Constitution was, in fact, a daring act of usurpation. The Marshalate was the result of a *coup d'état*, not less really so because there was no occasion to employ the force of arms in order to establish it. Yet Marshal Macmahon did not hesitate to accept the Presidency from those who had no right to bestow it, and he talks and acts now as though the one thing in France which must exist is his own power. So confident are his assumptions that it is difficult to suppose that he does not believe in himself and his divine right; but, if he does, his understanding, which even his friends admit to be not brilliant, must be marked by a simplicity almost unique.

We used to hear his honesty incessantly proclaimed, but since the

16th of May the praises lavished on him because of this virtue have not been quite so loud, and his last manifesto must surely silence them for ever. They always reminded us of a story which is told of the late Robert Hall. In answer to someone who was recommending a preacher as a very good man, he is reported to have said: "Good man, sir! good man! don't say that again. When I hear that said of a preacher I always suspect he is a fool." That is just the impression which the laudations of the Marshal's honesty has made upon us. He must certainly be a very great fool, indeed, if he is as honest as he has been represented. M. Thiers gave him his confidence, placed him at the head of the army, raised him to this position when he was suffering under the discredit which came on all the Imperialist generals, and in which he ought to bear his full share, and for a time he appreciated the favour and thanked the man who, as he said, had given him what was more than life, the opportunity of winning back the reputation he had lost. Yet he was content to become the tool of the base intrigue by which M. Thiers was deprived of power. We can easily believe that he was too short-sighted and stupid to understand that the policy of Thiers was that of sound Conservatism, and was best fitted to promote the true interests of order and religion. But to ask us to believe that he was so simple as not to see that the consent he gave to step into the seat of his friend, as soon as the schemings of the conspirators against freedom had driven M. Thiers from it, was dishonourable, is to make too large a draft upon our credulity. That he has so much honesty as would prevent him from repeating the crime of December, 1851, may probably be true, but the man who has sanctioned the proceedings of the present Government can only be credited with honesty by a very elastic interpretation of the word, unless indeed, his faults be excused on the plea of deficient understanding.

We hold it to be a positive injury to public morals when such pleas are set up, and a man is screened from the reprobation which his acts deserve because of an *a priori* belief in the soundness of his intentions. The Marshal is not in the position of a constitutional ruler who has had Ministers forced upon him, and has thus become obnoxious to the odium which attaches to their policy, though he may himself secretly disapprove it. The Duc de Broglie and M. de Fourtou could never have had an opportunity of perpetrating their crimes but for the favour of the Marshal. Neither the Assembly nor the nation has imposed them upon him. It is he who is doing his best to impose them upon the nation, and on the old maxim that "*quod facit per alios ipse facit*," all their sins, and they are not a few, lie at his door. The dismissal of *prefets* and *maires* was a very difficult task when it was attempted by M. Jules Simon, and even by M. Dufaure, but with

M. de Fourtou it has been the simplest procedure possible. The reason is that the Marshal is in thorough accord with the one, whereas it was his aim ever to thwart the other. The Marshal may be a puppet in the hands of others, as his apologists pretend, but if he be, he reserves to himself the power of deciding by whom the strings shall be pulled; and he could be as impracticable to a Liberal Minister, as he is easy and accommodating to Reactionaries, or the priests from whom they draw their inspiration. The Manifesto is the revelation both of the character and policy of the Marshal. With the soldier's courage he has made it distinctively his own utterance, and paraded his personal responsibility for it before all France and Europe. And what an utterance it is! The representative of the oldest and proudest royalty, addressing himself to the people of the feeblest state—say the principality of Monaco—could not have adopted a more arrogant tone, or more emphatically repeated the well-known saying of Louis XIV., "*L'état c'est moi.*" And who is it that thus treats France as a subject country, whose first business is to do his will? If he were descended from a long and illustrious ancestry, and could speak with the authority which the *jus divinum* of the king is supposed by those who believe in it to confer, or if he was the representative of a great national illusion like the Napoleon idea, or even if he had rendered distinguished service to the State, his haughty insolence might be intelligible. As it is, France has the humiliation of being dragooned in this fashion by a soldier whose one success is said to have been a "fluke," and who was foisted into his present position by one of the most unworthy intrigues in modern history. One point the Manifesto makes more clear than ever. If the Marshal is honest and does not mean a *coup d'état*, he is more weak than even his severest critics supposed. Perhaps the explanation is again that the priests are the inspiration of one of the most ill-conceived and injudicious State papers ever issued.

That the priests perceive their own interest in the game and are doing their best to win it, is clear to all observers. At first there was a little assumed coyness, but this has long since been laid aside. The Ministry would no doubt have been very glad to get Ultramontane support without committing themselves to Ultramontane policy, and there have been at times indications that might have deceived the unwary. But the "clericals" are not so infatuated as to throw away a chance which may probably never return to them. The whole policy of the last three months seems to us to indicate the presence of priestly advisers, men whose hatred of liberty is as blind as it is malignant. Astute politicians would hardly have gone to work after the blundering fashion which has excited the marvel and the ridicule of all Europe. We can understand that priests, trained in the doctrines of the Syllabus and

accustomed to regard Pius IX. as the incarnation of wisdom, might be betrayed into such follies, though they are not what Rome herself would have sanctioned in those days when skilful politicians guided her affairs. But only where there is an ignorance of this world as complete as that which is expected in cloisters and convents, does such madness seem possible. The Ministry may be composed of able men, but Ajax in his fiercest paroxysms of rage could not have struck more wildly and aimlessly ; and in this unreasoning and passionate conduct we find signs of that feline and feminine hate peculiarly characteristic of priests.

The prosecution of M. Gambetta is the latest and most conspicuous illustration of this fierce and reckless passion. If it be that they hope to silence their most powerful adversary by a shameless abuse of the forms of justice and law, a more base and cowardly policy can hardly be imagined. Even the annals of the empire do not record a more flagrant act of tyranny. But it so far differs from any high-handed procedure of the empire, that it is very doubtful whether the end can be secured, and if it be not, all the obloquy which has been incurred will have been braved in vain. It would, perhaps, be rash to predict such failure, for there seem to be so many rusty statutes which can be dragged out of the desuetude into which they had fallen in order to crush a champion of freedom, and the Ministry are so unscrupulous in taking advantage of them, that it is hard to say what may not be done. But success is questionable, and if obtained would be a poor compensation for the dishonour which has fallen upon the Government. Such ignoble rage may possibly be found in the breasts of the Duc de Broglie and his colleagues. They may be so lacking in chivalry as not to respect an honourable opponent ; they may be so dishonourable as to violate the first conditions of the game which they profess to play ; they may be so bent on victory that they do not scruple to strike from behind. But being so they only show how completely they have submitted themselves to the influence of priests. It is thus that priests work. When they dare not destroy, they will do their utmost to annoy ; and, in their anxiety to wound and vex an opponent, fail to appreciate the effect of their manifestations of petty spite upon their own reputation and influence. We believe that Gambetta will be stronger than ever because of the attacks made upon him ; that neither despotic rulers nor subservient courts will be able to suppress him ; that the people of France will redress any temporary wrong which may be done him ; and that the testimony to his wisdom and force which his enemies have given by this stupid persecution will strengthen his hold upon classes who found it hard to trust a moderation which they were disposed to regard as excessive. But even were it otherwise, the Ministry would have lost even more. To silence or to exclude from

the National Assembly the man who did not despair of France in the hour of her deepest humiliation, and whose efforts enabled her to save her honour, though they could not preserve the territory which had been played away on the fields of Worth and Sedan, is impossible. Priests may dream of it, and their journals exult in the idea that as providence has taken away the aged Consul, the law will silence the young Tribune, but it is simply a marvel that any politicians could be brought to harbour such a hope. The law, or rather pliant judges, eager to anticipate the wishes of the Marshal or his advisers, and quick to find statutes which will lend a sanction to their procedure, may pass a sentence, but France will set it aside. But if it did not, the dishonour resting on the Ministry for an action so base in its conception and so contemptible in all its causes and methods, is too heavy a price for honourable men to pay for the suppression of their most formidable adversary. If by some traitorous conspiracy the late Emperor had been able to seize the persons of Bismarck and Moltke on the eve of the war, he would have been a gainer for the time, but at the cost of eternal infamy. The disgrace which the Broglie-Fourtou Cabinet has incurred is less in degree, but the same in kind, and the advantage, if there be any, is immeasurably smaller.

Still, as we repeat, it is exactly the policy which would find favour with priests or statesmen under the guidance of priests, or of the devout women whom they influence at the confessionals. Gambetta is their foe: a disbeliever in the superstition which they dignify by the desecrated name of religion; an enemy of their schemes for bringing the education of France under their control; a consistent advocate of Cavour's great principle of a "free Church in a free State;" the ablest opponent of all attempts to entangle France in the crooked policy of the Vatican. If they so hated Thiers, one of whose many eccentricities was his belief in the temporal power of the Pope, still more intensely must they detest the great orator who is a friend of Italian liberty. At every point they and he come into collision. Whom they love, he hates; what he desires, they ban with all their anathemas. Hence their great aim is to crush him, and they are not very scrupulous as to the means they employ in order to effect this.

This uncompromising antagonism between liberty and the priests is no new thing. They are natural enemies, and nowhere has the antagonism been so fully developed or provoked such fierce conflict as in France.

"It is" (said Edgar Quinet, in his 'Lectures on Christianity')* "the destiny of France to contain altogether the newest Revolution and the oldest

* "Lectures on Christianity." Cocks' Translation, p. 17.

Church ; and the marvel is that the future springs from this very contradiction. Louis XVI. resolves the difficulty by the veto, the Committee of Public Safety by the worship of the Supreme Being, Napoleon by the Coronation, and Charles X. by his ordinances ; all these Governments have been dragged away by this question, which is not yet resolved. How can we help seeing that Catholicism has been for half a century accomplishing among us an extraordinary mission ? *As soon as ever France wishes to repose, this spirit of the past revives : it rises, provokes, and harasses her, till, to escape from it, she casts herself into the unknown."*

Wise words, marked by the true prophetic insight. Every change that has taken place in France since has furnished a new illustration of them, and never was their truth more manifest than now. Everything that has tended to the so-called " Catholic " revival—the skilfully-organised pilgrimages to the shrines of the saints, the stories of miraculous apparitions, and the marvellous cures which they have effected—has only meant a new attack on liberty. Society is honeycombed with the intrigues of Jesuits, who care nothing for any special form of government except as it is likely to touch the interests of the Church, but who, for that reason, intensely hate the Republic, knowing well that between it and Rome there never can be a cordial reconciliation. " The Jesuit," as Michelet said, thirty years ago, " is not only a confessor, but a *director*, and, as such, consulted about everything." What mischief may be wrought by a body of men who have no home, nor country, nor family but the Church, who have severed all the ties which bind other men to society, and so have a certain modifying influence upon their ambitions and hopes, and who pursue their own ends with the more audacity because they have persuaded themselves into the belief that they are working for a cause which will sanctify and ennoble their basest actions, it is not easy to realise. The popular instinct is true when it fixes upon them as the deadly and irreconcilable foes of freedom and progress. Michelet's eloquent words are as applicable now as when they were first uttered :—

" Take any man in the street, the first passer-by, and ask him, ' What are the Jesuits ? ' He will answer, without hesitation, '*The counter-revolution.*' Such is the firm faith of the people ; it has never varied it, and you will never change it. If that word, pronounced in the College of France, has surprised some persons, it runs that, by dint of intellect, we have lost common sense. Men of intellect, you who would blush to listen to the popular voice, apply yourselves to science ; study, and after ten years devoted to history and the books of the Jesuits, I foretell that you will find in them but one meaning : *the death of Liberty.* What is the use of denying it ? Do you not see that nobody will be satisfied with fine speeches ? Shout Liberty ! as you will, and say you are of this or of that party. We care little for that. If your heart is Jesuitical, march that way—it is the road to

Fribourg ; if you are loyal and pure, come here—this is France. In the general decay of parties, in the more or less disinterested coalition of many men of diverse opinions, there seems to be now but two parties remaining, even as there are but two spirits : *the spirit of life and the spirit of death*. This is a situation of things far more awful and dangerous than of late years, though immediate commotions are less to be feared. How would it be if the spirit of death, having mastered religion, went on infecting society in politics, literature, and the arts—in its very vitals ? ” *

A mournful thing it is for a nation when the religion that is supreme within it is regarded thus. Yet who can say that this is not a just description, or that the phenomena of to-day are different, in any essential point, from those which called out these burning denunciations. The progress of the “men of death,” as Michelet calls the Jesuits, has not yet been stopped. Their power, it is to be feared, is greater than it was thirty years ago. It may be hoped that their strength is less real than appearances would indicate ; but the signs of vitality and growth are too evident to be questioned. That they will regain France we cannot believe, but they are fired with the hope, and are straining every nerve in order to realise it. Their extreme zeal is, indeed, one of the great difficulties with which the Ministry have to contend. They need the help of the priesthood, but they know that any ostentatious display of its sympathy would do as much harm as good. The game which they have to play is, in this respect, beset with very perplexing complications, both at home and abroad. To irritate Italy and so suggest the idea of a fresh European disturbance, which would assuredly be the result of any interference in the affairs of the Peninsula, would be not only to rouse the intense opposition of all who see that the first condition for the recovery of France is the maintenance of peace, but seriously to imperil the prosperity and even the security of the country. Yet the first object for which the priests are working is to secure the aid of France in the recovery of the temporal power,—an issue for which they are still mad enough to hope. There are numbers, too, who are alarmed about the supposed designs of Gambetta and the Left who nevertheless hate the priests, and, if they had to choose between the two, would rather face any possibilities of revolutionary excess than lend their help to the establishment of priestly supremacy. The Government cannot afford to dispense either with the priests or with these prudent and moderate Conservatives ; but the task of rallying both to the same standard is enough to tax the powers of the ablest tactician.

Alas for the nation which has such rulers, and, above all, such teachers of religion ! The French people have often been reproached

* Michelet'. — “The Jesuits.” Cocks' Translation, pp. 5, 6.

for the levity with which they have overthrown one Government after another, but if the blame were fairly apportioned, would it not rest on the rulers rather than the ruled? When had France a Government which was even tolerable, or to which Englishmen would have submitted for an hour, except under the pressure of irresistible force? At the present time it is hard to say whether indignant contempt for the weak and cowardly tyrants who have seized the reins of power, or admiration for the people so nobly patient and so quietly resolved, is the stronger feeling. So, too, the nation is condemned for its scepticism and impiety. But when religion is ever presented to it as the foe of humanity and freedom, when the worst deeds of oppression and injustice are consecrated by its sanction, and done in its professed interests, when its ministers are the unscrupulous agents of tyranny, is it wonderful that unbelief flourishes? The self-devotion of the Archbishops of Paris has often been lauded, and, in one point of view, deservedly lauded. But the people well know that the Church which they served is hostile to all their aspirations, and the nobility even of heroic deaths cannot make them forget the iniquities of the system, whose noxious power is felt alike in public and in private, and of which these sufferers were the representatives and the heads. If they had doubted before how far the hierarchy was in sympathy with the reaction against which they are fighting, the present Archbishop has dispelled any uncertainty by the base subserviency to the Court which led him to refuse the honours of a funeral service in the Madeleine to the great statesman to whom he owed his Archbishopric, for no reason except that he was a friend of the Republic. The people note all this, and in the recoil from the superstition which caricatures Christianity, they rush into unbelief. Surely there must be better days in store for a people who have so many noble qualities, and who for centuries have been so cruelly used. Their present attitude is an indication that they have profited by the hard lessons of experience, and ought itself to secure for them our hearty sympathy. But if other influence were needed to excite this feeling, it must be found in the recollection that the battle they are fighting is ours also. Clericalism is the same everywhere, and the defeat which we have no doubt is awaiting it in France will have effects extending to this country as well as to the Continent of Europe. The battle becomes keener as the crisis approaches. God defend the right!

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

THE opinion which we expressed in our last number as to the vanity of all trust in the Bishops as the champions of Anglican Protestantism has been abundantly confirmed by the events of the past month. The debates in the Upper House of Convocation ministered a consolation to the class of minds which are always disposed to cling to any anchorage, however shifting and uncertain, rather than venture into the stormy waters of change. But even the little promise of energy and determination which they gave has to a large extent passed away. It might seem as though their Lordships thought that enough had been done to soothe the irritated feelings of the country, and that it was necessary now to reassure those of the clergy who may have been disgusted by some of their utterances. It is hard to blame them, for it is perfectly certain that in the matter of the Confessional they can do nothing except withhold their patronage from those who have prominently identified themselves with the movement for its restoration, and it may therefore be best for them to pursue that policy of moderation—wonderfully like a miserable piece of shilly-shally though it be—which is essential to the safety of the Establishment. Individuals are not to be blamed for the faults of systems which make them what they are. The Bishops of an Erastian Establishment are bound to tread in the “*Via Media*,” and if the result is that they are weak and uncertain, where earnest men are crying out for decision and force, it would be unjust to fasten on them the responsibility for faults which are inherent in the institution. If we dwell on their conduct it is not for the purpose of holding them up to condemnation, but rather for the sake of exposing the folly of the expectation, still so confidently cherished by many, that the Bishops, having been roused to a sense of the peril, will find out a mode of escape. Whether they have really been awakened to the seriousness of the crisis it would be extremely rash to say, but if they have, it is manifest that they are so bewildered by the difficulties around them, and so conscious of their own helplessness, that, in despair of providing a remedy, they are doing their best to persuade the people to think lightly of the disease.

There is the Bishop of Manchester, unquestionably one of the ablest men on the Bench, and one who is most intensely anxious to do his duty. If he has a fault it is that he seems to have the idea that he is as indispensable to the religious guidance of Lancashire as Marshal Macmahon fancies himself for the political security of France. He is sincere, he is conscientious, he is full of courage, as witness the remarkable outspoken and unepiscopal speech at the Manchester banquet, by

which he has drawn down upon his head the maledictions of the Lancashire Conservatives. Yet when he comes to deal with the internal difficulties of the Church, it is very hard to elicit a distinct idea of his policy. He will and he wont; he does not like habitual confession, but he sees the value of the confessor's work in special circumstances; he approves of the Public Worship Act, but he would not insist on too rigid a line of Uniformity; he is resolved not to ordain a clergyman who holds the extreme view of confession, and yet he patronises Mr. Knox Little, who, we observe, is appointed to preach a special sermon to working-men at the Cathedral. Some of his utterances about confession are decided enough, but they are mixed in extraordinary fashion with others of a very different tendency. In his interview with the deputations, of which Mr. Maden Holt was the head, he pronounced as strongly as could be desired against habitual confession; but in the same address he contended to give currency to most of the fallacies by which the Ritualists defend it. It might be grossly abused, no doubt, but what difference in principle is there between the confessional and the inquiry-room at Mr. Moody's meetings? The "Priest in Absolution" might probably be very bad, but were not the deputation accusing it on hearsay evidence, and did they not fancy that Lord Redesdale's quotations represented its average character instead of being the selection of its worst passages? The mode of examination suggested was very offensive, but was not the sin it was intended to correct very foul and very rampant, and did not this form some palliation for any mistakes into which some had fallen in their earnest desire to correct it? We do not know that Ritualists could have desired a more specious advocacy than this. It does not offend as a straightforward and uncompromising defence of their cause certainly would, and yet it presents all that they could urge on their own behalf. In the matter of ritual the Bishop inclines still more to the same school, insisting that defects and omissions are as censurable as excesses, and pointing out to the Evangelicals that a rigid application of the law would tell upon them as much as their adversaries. Is the Bishop to be condemned for this apparent weakness? He must see the wide distinction between the slight rubrical transgressions of a party who have no ulterior designs, and the violation of law by a body of men who are deliberately seeking to efface all traces of the Reformation from the Anglican service. But the law must be enforced impartially, and he, as its representative, cannot be blamed for placing both kinds of transgressors in the same category. Principles of justice and enactments of law are not to be set aside even for the sake of stamping out Ritualism. What is more, the Bishop knows he could not trample upon them if he would, for, despite the strong excitement among a large body of the laity, the first act of violence and

injustice which could be fairly represented as persecution, even though directed against the most unpopular man of an unpopular party, would be the death-knell of the Establishment. We doubt whether he has not exceeded his powers, as he has assuredly sinned against his own principles, in asserting his intention not to ordain any who enforced the practice of habitual confession. If they are not amenable to the condemnation of the law, he is only stretching his own prerogative when he thus assumes to exclude them from the ministry of the Church. Besides, what comes of the Broad Church theory of comprehensiveness of which we hear so much? A Ritualist clergyman having confessional-boxes in his Church, and urging his people to use the means of grace thus offered to them, but stopping short of any attempt to exclude from the Lord's table those who do not confess has surely not departed further from the law of the Church than, say, has Mr. H. R. Haweis, or Mr. Stopford Brooke, or even the Dean of Westminster himself. It may be doubted even whether he has more deeply wounded the susceptibilities and awakened the anxieties of intelligent Protestants by his Romish innovations, than have some of the Broad Church divines by their remarkable explanations of the supernatural element in Holy Scripture. On what principle is the line of comprehension to be drawn which will include the one and stop short of the other? To us there is nothing so clear as that the Establishment must find a place even for those who so far take the advantage of the language of its formularies as to bring in a practice of confession, or, as at is called, "Absolution by the Precious Blood," even in defiance of the wishes of the Bishops. Indeed, how it can be possible for Dr. Fraser to carry out his own law while Mr. Knox-Little is perhaps the most popular clergyman in his diocese, transcends our understanding.

The Bishop of Oxford's reply to an address from a local branch of the Holy Cross Society in his diocese is equally discouraging to Protestantism; but there is a manly straightforwardness in its tone which commends itself to those who, like ourselves, most strongly disapprove of its general sentiment. Dr. Mackarness has the courage to speak a word in defence of the Society and in opposition to its assailants. He is sure that such members of the Society as "he numbers among his own brethren and friends are incapable of playing a treacherous or dishonourable part," and, even further, he has no words but those of "heartly commendation and thankfulness" for the original object of the Society. Still he has cautions and warnings to address to its members. He disapproves of the dallying with Romish practices, and though he thinks there may have been "some hypocrisy," as there "certainly has been some extravagance, in the recent outcry" against the now celebrated manual for Anglican confessors, he distinctly tells the correspondents that if [their

Society cannot repudiate the system, "that is a system of confession morally and virtually compulsory confession," then the "Church will repudiate their Society." If the gentlemen addressed are prudent, they will certainly abandon a society which is not at all necessary to the carrying on of their operations. But Protestants would be short-sighted, indeed, if such a sacrifice were to content them. The most obnoxious, most perilous development of sacerdotalism has become identified with the Society, but the Society might be broken up and the evil flourish as abundantly as ever. The Bishop of Oxford is to be honoured for the boldness with which he sets himself to correct what he regards as the extravagance of a popular agitation; but the presence of a man of so much judgment and power on the Episcopal Bench is not an auspicious sign for Protestantism. If he and other Bishops who try to discredit the outcry against the "Priest in Absolution" and the Society which has endorsed it, would point out the exaggeration of which they complain, we should be better able to understand their real position. There are always some violent expressions in a state of public excitement such as that which Lord Redesdale's disclosures produced; but, on the whole, what has been said is amply justified by the facts. We have no apology for those who have cast imputations on the characters of individuals simply because of their connection with the book or the Society, but the reprobation of the thing itself cannot be too decided. Nothing is so easy as to complain of violence, and nothing more likely to elicit sympathy. We live in an age when men are frightened by words that sound unpleasant, and when an imputation of violence is sufficient with many to neutralise the force of a powerful argument. But, as Mr. Gladstone has happily reminded us, violence is a relative term, and language cannot fairly be described as violent unless it goes beyond the necessities of the case. In the present instance these limits have most assuredly not been transgressed, so long as condemnation has been confined to the evils of the Confessional. Of course it is natural for Bishops to object to popular agitation as too violent, and it would, in fact, be very difficult to make any utterances sufficiently mild for their palate. If such objections to the earnest denunciations of the book and its abettors as those of the Bishop of Oxford, express nothing more than the Episcopal dislike of plain speaking, it is a small matter. If they mean that the Bishops do not like to have the practice of confession so absolutely set aside, and desire to give some reality to the commission they give priests at their ordination, evil days are rapidly approaching, both for them and the Establishment.

That the Public Worship Act is not likely to produce great results becomes increasingly evident. The Bishops can stay the hands of prosecutors and deprive aggrieved parishioners of the remedy with

which the Act professes to provide them, and some of them are apparently disposed to exercise this power to the utmost. There is no lack of complainants, but as soon as they propose to act they find themselves effectually checked. The Bishops of Oxford and Lichfield have both been distinguishing themselves in this way during the last month. The former has arrested the prosecution against Canon Carter, of Clewer, and the latter, with far less excuse, has refused to interfere in the case of the Church at Wolverhampton, of which Mr. Body was formerly the incumbent. That the present vicar is violating the law of the Church is tolerably clear, but the Bishop throws his ægis over him. If his Lordship's views are to be carried out, the Ridsdale judgment is a nullity, and there might as well be no law at all. But it would seem as though this is what many of the Prelates wish. They hope the judgment will appease the Protestant feeling in the Church and the country, and now they will try and leave things as they are, conceding to the Ritualist clergy as much liberty as possible, on condition that they will show becoming deference to the wishes of their spiritual fathers. The well-known Mr. Lowder, one of the most active and at the same time most extreme clergymen in the East of London, has publicly asserted that the Primate, while publicly branding their school as conspirators, in private addresses them as friends. The Archbishop can hardly afford to allow some of his statements to pass without notice ; but though his Grace may possibly show that they need some correction, we believe that they only too accurately set forth the awkwardness of his position, and the appearance of trimming which it gives to his conduct. That he knew of the existence of the Society and its manual for confession, as Mr. Lowder asserts, long before they were dragged into public, is in every way probable. Whether he is to be blamed for not directing attention to it is a question which will be differently answered according to the view men take of the relative importance of peace and Protestantism. He may, at all events, plead in his own favour that those who have exposed the evil have been unable to suggest a cure.

BOOKS ON THE TABLE.

MR. SERVICE'S *Sermons** afford another proof of the revolt that is going on in Scotland against the "Standards." The sermons were extravagantly praised in the *Spectator*. They display no miraculous genius ; but the author has considerable vigour, and his book is worth reading. His ideas of what we ought to do when we meet together on Sunday are equally original, amusing, and impracticable.

* *Salvation Here and Hereafter: Sermons and Essays.* By the Rev. JOHN E VICE. London : Macmillan & Co. (Price 6s.)

Mr. Shillito's *Womankind** is a series of Lectures addressed to Young Women, on their Duties, Temptations, and Privileges. It is full of sensible, kindly advice, which young women, and women who are no longer young, will do well to follow. Messrs. King and Co. have given the book a most charming dress, and the price at which it is published is remarkable.

The little volume,† prepared by the son of the late Professor Charlton as a memorial of his father, will be highly valued by large numbers of persons who cherish for the late Professor warm affection and deep respect. The sermons are characterised by manly vigour, solid sense, and modest piety. The paper on the "Eloquence of Demosthenes" contains excellent suggestions for preachers and speakers.

Another memorial volume,‡ which we ought to have noticed before, has been published by the widow of the late Rev. David Loxton, of Sheffield. It consists principally of a collection of Mr. Loxton's sermons, in which those who knew him will recognise the fine feeling, and the freshness, clearness, and energy of thought by which his preaching was distinguished. He was a man whose powers ought to have secured for him a far wider recognition than he actually received, although he was widely known and cordially respected. The memoir by Mrs. Loxton is most admirably done.

Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton have recently issued the principal works of William Jay, in eight handsome volumes;§ the "Morning and Evening Exercises," which consist of short readings for every morning and evening in the year, occupy four volumes; the "Short Discourses for Family Reading," two; "Family Prayers," one; and the "Christian Contemplated," one. William Jay is fast becoming a tradition, but was a man worth knowing and worth remembering. His preaching was distinguished by an admirable ease, naturalness, shrewdness, and vigour; and he had a style which perfectly suited his characteristic genius.

RECEIVED FOR PARIS MISSION.

John Drew, Esq.....£5 0 0

* *Womankind*. By JOSEPH SHILLITO. Second Thousand. London: Henry S. King & Co. (Price 3s. 6d.)

† *In Memoriam of the Late Rev. J. M. Charlton, M.A.* Edited by his Eldest Son. London: J. F. Shaw & Co. (Price 5s.)

‡ *Sermons*. By the late Rev. DAVID LOXTON. With a short Memoir by his Widow. London: Hodder & Stoughton. (Price 7s. 6d.)

§ *Works of William Jay*. Messrs. HODDER and STOUGHTON. 8 vols. (Price 5s. each.) We believe that each set can be purchased separately.

The Congregationalist.

NOVEMBER, 1877.

THE CHURCH CONGRESS AND PROTESTANTISM.

THE Croydon Church Congress—so much talked about, so hopefully anticipated by some, so anxiously feared by others—has come and gone, and the Church is as tranquil as before. The fervour of the thanksgivings which have been offered for this result is the true measure of the apprehensions which were entertained. Clergymen of different schools met and parted without any rupture, and this seems so marvellous that there is no limit to the felicitations which have been exchanged all round. Canon Ryle became quite unctuous at the Congress on the happy influence of personal contact on men of antagonistic opinions, and quoted a story from Charles Lamb to the effect that he could not hate a man after he had seen him, in confirmation of his view. It is certainly unfortunate that clergymen of the same Church should need to have such a lesson inculcated, but as it is so, it is well that they should have such wise instructors, and show themselves able to profit by the teaching. An unconscious and unintentional, but not less stinging, satire on the state of things was contained in the strange apology of a Church defender, who argued that as it would not be possible to bring Whigs and Tories together in a political congress, so it was not surprising that it should be hard for "Catholics" and "Protestants" to meet in loving brotherhood. It was forgotten that Parliament is made up of these opponents, who not only exercise self-restraint but are able to keep up personal friendships, regardless of political differences. No doubt this is a proof of the value of that association which the good Canon desiderates; but surely a great religious fellowship rests on an entirely different basis from a political assembly, and it might have been assumed that there was an underlying sentiment of brotherhood which would have made the fears with which

the Congress was anticipated utterly absurd. That it was not so is due merely to the nature of the bonds by which the different parties are held together. They are united of constraint, not willingly, and the more earnest men on either side believe that their opponents are untrue to the law of the Church, and are, in fact, endangering its existence. Of the personal geniality of the great body of the clergy there can be no question. Numbers of them would even be friendly with Dissenters, and do any act of personal kindness for their ministers, provided no question of right was raised between them. Much more likely would they have been to cultivate fraternal relations with each other if there had not been the disturbing elements which their position in the National Church introduces. Those who are most eager for the continuance of the Establishment are, indeed, clear-sighted enough to perceive that there must be a place in it for all schools, and they insist on mutual tolerance. But even where the necessity is recognised by their more ardent friends, it is not welcome, and serves itself to produce an irritation which it is not always possible to repress. The discussions about the "S. S. C." and the "Priest in Absolution" have of late raised the righteous indignation of the Evangelicals to an unusual pitch, while the friends of the Society and the book have been equally exasperated by the attacks made upon both. Hence the chief peril of the Congress. The differences were real and tangible, and the feelings awakened intense and ardent. The points at issue were certainly not to be classed among the "infinitesimally little" of which Canon Farrar spoke so glibly, only to call forth the not unfair retort that those who talk thus only show how infinitesimally little is their own knowledge of them. The controversy is one of the most vital by which any Church could be agitated, and it was not surprising that its discussion should be anticipated with very gloomy forebodings.

The danger has been escaped by the simplest of all processes: the subject has not been discussed at all. Diplomacy has had a complete triumph, so far as the maintenance of decorum and peace is concerned, but it has left the real difficulties untouched, and its success will be variously estimated according to the relative importance which men assign to appearances and realities. Those who fancy that a make-believe is as good as a fact will be rejoiced; those who have a supreme contempt for shams will simply be disgusted. The *Rock*, which has "strongly insisted on the inexpediency of Evangelicals attending" the Congress at all, describes it as "Church diplomacy, artifice, compromise, and dissimulation—necessarily developed in the councils of so incongruous a gathering;" and though the language is strong, in some respects decidedly too strong, it is not very surprising that a Protestant organ should take the view it indicates. Protestant the *Rock* decidedly

is : somewhat too much given to fanciful interpretations of prophecy, and, what is worse, too ready to propagate *canards* and to magnify small offences, but still uncompromising in its Protestantism, and therefore utterly dissatisfied, not to say indignant, with the course the Congress has taken. The feeling is perfectly reasonable, for it is not to be denied that it is the Protestant cause which has suffered by the Congress. The silence which was maintained on the crucial points of the controversy was an injury to its interests. The "S. S. C." could not hope to have an approval of its procedure. It was sufficient for it that it escaped the emphatic condemnation which it deserved, and which, if the opinion of the English laity had prevailed, it would have received. That a great Church assembly should have met without expressing an adverse opinion is itself an immense gain. It is not too much to say that if the object was to abate the hatred with which the English people at present regard the Confessional, it could hardly have been secured more effectually than by the course which the Congress, under the influence of the Archbishop, pursued. It is, in our judgment, an utter disgrace to the Primate that the Congress has separated without giving any testimony on the daring attempt to convert English clergymen into priestly confessors, if not directors. Events, we believe, will show, and that before very long, that it has been as egregious a mistake in policy as it has been an act of disloyalty to Protestant principle. The laity are not in a mood to be trifled with, and the Archbishop may yet learn that it would have been better to face the possibilities of a storm at Croydon than to drive the people to despair of obtaining any help from their rulers to deliver them from the aggressions of priestcraft.

Nor was it only the silence where there ought to have been decided utterance of which there was reason to complain. The extreme men were placed in positions of prominence and honour, and with the exception of a passing allusion in the Primate's opening address, there was nothing to suggest that their conduct was open to censure. "It is" (said the President) "a peculiarity of this nineteenth century, so apt to vaunt itself of the many excellencies that characterise it, that when a war breaks out the regular armies are attended by an undisciplined following of light skirmishers. Sometimes they are called Bashi-Bazouks, and sometimes they are called Cossacks, but in whichever form they exhibit themselves, the civilised nations of the world are apt to say that it is quite an anachronism that such people should be found in the nineteenth century. Now I do not say that we have an exact reproduction of such things in our theological warfare, but still it may be well to take warning." If there be here an indirect reference to the Ritualists, they may encourage themselves with the thought that Bashi-Bazouks and Cossacks are bracketed together, and that they are only

involved in the same condemnation, if there be any at all, which falls upon the Evangelicals. Then while Canon Carter was prominent in the Conference, Mr. Knox-Little was one of the appointed preachers for the Sunday following it, and these two have been the sturdiest champions of the Confessional. The sermon of the latter is one of the boldest and most out-spoken manifestos on the subject. One or two extracts may give some idea of its spirit and bearing, and enable our readers better to appreciate the significance of the high position which was assigned him at Croydon. "But" (he says) "the name of 'priest' represents a magnificent reality, a most splendid heritage. It comes from the heart of the eternal Father: it comes not from the creative fiat of the Father, not from the redemptive action of the Son, not from the inspiring breath of the Spirit; its origin is in the deepest eternity. We hear it first in the unbeginning ages, when there rolled forth those awful sentences of voluntary offering and full commission in the secret converse of the Father and the Son, 'Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me;' 'Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec.' And the earthly priesthood comes on the powers of that mysterious commission, 'As My Father sent Me, *even so* send I you.'" Possibly some of our readers may be puzzled and others made indignant by these words. Some will pronounce them balderdash, and others regard them as nothing short of blasphemy—a judgment in favour of which a good deal might be said; but all will agree that they are intended to give us a very awful conception of what the priesthood is. Perhaps Mr. Knox-Little will find it hard to define exactly what he means by this excited rhetoric, but it is clear that he wishes to impress the minds of his people and others with a very lofty idea of the functions which have been given to him as a representative of an office which dates back to the "unbeginning ages" of the "deepest eternity."

His view of Confession is in perfect harmony with this conception—exaggerated even for a "Catholic"—of the rights of the priesthood, and is enunciated with his characteristic distinctness and strength: "At least, my friends, be charitable. If you are so healthy that you need not these means, at least, I say, extend your charity to those poor souls who need them. I tell you plainly from my heart, my brothers, many, many of you, need confession. Many, many, it has been the means of saving, blessed be God! Denounce, abandon Confession! I will not do this thing. It is a blessed, precious means to sinking souls of pardon through the precious Blood." And again: "Have you ever reflected that these two crises, the moment of sacramental communion and the moment of our final agony, stand ghost-like robed in everlasting mourning; nay, to the Christian, angel-faced, clad

in garments of glory, bearing between them the burden of this mortal life. You ought to receive the communion often ; you may die before the setting sun is gone : if so, you are to prepare for communion and for dying. Then your Church at least permits you to use confession as often as you know you need such preparation, and, permitting you to use it, she lays on her priests, to whom the power of absolution is entrusted, the *duty* of receiving you in your penitence, and absolving you in the name of the Lord."

This is one of the men whom it was resolved to honour at the Congress, by inviting him to preach one of the special sermons on the Sunday following. An attempt was made to absolve the Primate himself from the responsibility of this procedure, and it is probably true that he did not initiate the proposal. Not the less must he accept a share of the blame attaching to this unfortunate selection. "Notice came," says the Dean of Manchester, "for Mr. W. J. Knox-Little—who was absent in the Holy Land—in the usual form: 'His Grace the Archbishop requests you, and has appointed you' (I cannot give the exact words) 'to preach,'" &c. This invitation, we are told in reply, was issued in June last, that is, before the delivery of the particular sermon from which we have quoted. But this does not alter the essential facts of the case. We have had rather too much of these endeavours to shield the Bishops from censure for acts of this kind. Their defence is rested on what really are technical grounds, and will not stand close scrutiny. It may be true that their nominal power is limited, but their moral influence is necessarily very great, and it is their failure to employ this that provokes just animadversion. The Bishop of Manchester, in whose diocese Mr. Knox-Little is a clergyman, did not nominate him to be the preacher at the Cathedral during the Mission week, but if his Lordship had interposed, in compliance with the earnest remonstrances of many of the Evangelicals, the appointment would either not have been made, or would have led to a division among the clergy themselves that would have deprived it of its chief significance. So in relation to this preaching at the Congress, the Primate probably would have preferred a man of another school, or if there must be a High Churchman, one of a less pronounced type. But to say the least, he did not veto the nomination of this preacher of the Sacrament of Penance. It was not too late to interfere after the sermon in vindication of the "S. S. C." had been preached at St. Alban's, Manchester. But the arrangement remained undisturbed. It is perfectly certain that the Primate will not be generally acquitted as an accessory to the outrage upon the Protestant feeling of the country on any mere technical plea. The Dean of Manchester seems warranted in saying, that "Mr. Little's great power as a preacher, and entire devotion to his Master's work, outweighed in the highest

quarters what some consider an injudicious assertion of opinion" (mark the mild language in which the Dean of our reformed Church speaks of the monstrous assertion of priestly right and prerogative), "and, therefore, that he was gladly welcomed as one who would bear true testimony on the great truths on which our salvation depends."

But if this view is to be accepted, it is a very serious matter indeed. In Parliament, the Archbishop has more than once spoken strongly on the policy and the teachings of the school of which Mr. Knox-Little is a prominent member; he has even gone so far as to brand the party as a Romanising conspiracy. If there be any truth in the allegation, then Mr. Knox-Little is one of the most dangerous of the conspirators, for his acknowledged devotion, his fervid eloquence, his power to attract and influence large popular audiences, make him one of the most successful apostles of this neo-Romanism. Yet he is announced as one of the preachers at Croydon, on the Sunday after the meetings of the Congress at which the Primate was President, and not only with his sanction, but at his official invitation. The necessary effect of all this is evidently to produce the impression that the Primate regards the opinions and practices of Mr. Knox-Little and his friends as less obnoxious than they appear to the Protestants of England. But then what are we to make of the alarmist speech with which the Public Worship Act was heralded? There has certainly been no improvement since that speech was delivered. On the contrary, the excitement in the public mind is stronger than ever, and is more than justified by what is known of the "Priest in Absolution." His Grace himself was compelled to acknowledge the gravity of the facts which Lord Redesdale set before the country. And the practical comment on the whole was the silence of the Congress on the subject of the hour, and the nomination of Mr. Knox-Little.

The Archbishop's two speeches both tended to produce the same effect. They were remarkably clever, and if consummate policy be a quality to be admired in a spiritual chief, they deserve the highest praise. The art with which the feeling of the Congress was anticipated and met was perfect. For the success of the moment, nothing, in fact, was left to be desired. The same tact which had led the Archbishop to invite the Congress to the diocese, guided him unerringly through the difficulties amid which he had to steer. After the manner of Richard II. dealing with his rebellious subjects, he had placed himself at the head of a body which has increased in self-assertion as it has grown in numbers, and has often shown a good deal of unruly turbulence, especially towards Bishops; and he was bound to prove himself equal to the exigencies of the situation. His success is undeniable so far as it goes. It may be questioned whether any other Prelate could have played

the part of Æolus with such skill, and been able so thoroughly to hold the fierce storms, simply waiting for an outlet, in absolute subjection :—

“Hic vasto rex Æolus antro
Luctantes ventos tempestatesque sonoras
Imperio premit, ac vinclis et carcere frenat.
Illi indignantes magno cum murmure montis
Circum claustra fremunt ; celsâ sedet Æolus arce
Sceptra tenens, mollitque animos et temperat iras.
Ni faciat, maria ac terras cœlumque profundum
Quippe ferant rapidi secum, verrantque per auras.”

Which may be freely translated : ‘Here in this great assembly, the Primate represses by his Episcopal majesty the struggling parties and the noisy factions, restraining them with laws and bonds of order. They, full of righteous indignation, murmur against his authority, and often break into angry shouts. The Primate, dwelling in the lofty height of Erastian calm, seeks to only sweeten their temper, and abate their rage. Should he fail to accomplish this they might sweep away Bishops and Churches, and even the glorious constitution itself, and bear them madly on to destruction.’ To exercise this moderating and restraining force was the task the Archbishop set himself, and he has succeeded. But his power has its bounds, and it may yet prove that when the check he applied for the moment is removed, the outburst will be all the more violent because of it.

“Ac venti, velut agmine facto
Qua data porta, ruunt, et terras turbine perfiant.”

That is, pursuing again our free mode of ‘adaptation, the storms of controversy, when once an outlet is afforded, will rush forth as in one great company, and convulse both Church and State as with the violence of a whirlwind.’

The misfortune of the Archbishop is that he is so deficient in “vinclis et carcere,” and that his endeavours to supply the want have only issued in a fiercer exasperation of those he desires to control, without any material addition to his power of restraint. It cannot be said even by its most ardent partisans that the Public Worship Act has proved a success, or Lord Penzance’s Court an effectual instrument of discipline. One of its principal results would seem to be a restraint upon the Primate himself, who, if he be not cowed by the defiant attitude of the “Catholics,” at all events recognises the necessity of conciliation, “mollitque animos et temperat iras.” The most remarkable feature, however, of his efforts in this direction is the maladroitness with which he sometimes spoils his own work. Yet let him not be too severely judged. What seems unwise may really be forced upon him by the stern necessities of circumstance. The Romish sympathisers are not the only party he has to consider, and even when seeking to disarm their hostility, or at least that of their moderate friends, he has to

remember that there are Protestant susceptibilities on the other side which would be extremely dangerous to provoke. Hence, perhaps, some of the strange inconsistencies in his utterances. To christen a party "Bashi-Bazouks," even though it be balanced by designating their opponents "Cossacks," was surely a blunder, the full consequences of which will be felt when the laughter which passed off so unhappy an allusion has died away, and the sting of the epithet rankles in the memory. No doubt it was perfectly consistent with his Grace's usual mode of regarding extremes, but it was a risky development of a policy which in any form is as questionable in tactics as it is wrong in principle.

But it was in his closing speech that the President made the most serious blunders. His object was to place the Establishment, and all its regulations, in such a light as to neutralise any prejudice which had been entertained in respect to any of them. The view which he gave was that of the most unquestioning optimism—rather, of an optimism pushed to such extreme as to make it positively absurd. As the pleasant sentences of felicitation rolled forth in such mellifluous accents, it might seem as though nothing but some inexplicable intellectual or moral perversity could induce anyone to doubt of the blessings of the great institution of which he was the head. First, there were the Bishops, in relation to whom a speaker had said, "that man was never designated to the office whom the clergy would have placed there if they had a free opportunity of expressing their minds." How could such a view be more emphatically condemned than by the appearance of the platform, where sat the Bishops of Winchester and Lichfield, of Lincoln and Derry (to say nothing, of course, of the distinguished speaker himself), to testify to the wisdom of the State in its selection, and to show that if the clergy would not have selected these men, "so much the worse for the clergy." It was convenient to ignore the Bishop of Manchester, who is doing more real service to the Establishment than all those the Primate named together, but whom certainly the clergy would never have chosen. In fact, his Grace was on very dangerous ground, and it was well that he touched it so lightly. The clergy understand perfectly well that there are few Prime Ministers who would intentionally appoint a clerical-minded Bishop, and that at the present time the disposition to look unfavourably on men of this type is stronger than ever. But this was little as compared with the next touch of the Primate's humour. He turned from the Bishops to the Judicial Committee, and from the Judicial Committee to Parliament. For the Supreme Court, what he had to urge was that Lord Hatherley was a member of it, and on that fact he reasons in this extraordinary style: "The name of Lord Hatherley would challenge the respect of every Churchman throughout the empire, and I feel confident that while we have

such judges as he, not one word that is said against the judgment-seat can even for a moment be listened to by good Churchmen, or good Christians of any persuasion." It is to be assumed that the Primate was in earnest, and meant his inference to be accepted as really justified by his facts ; but it is very hard to understand how it could be so, or how he could ever fancy that this manner of dealing with intelligent opponents as though they were a set of children, clamouring about they knew not what, would be of any practical avail. Lord Hatherley's character has certainly a heavy burden laid upon it when it is made to bear the responsibility for the entire Judicial Committee. Besides, although there has been some wrong and foolish talk about the judges, the question which the Ritualists raise is not one to be settled by a certificate of personal character. They object to the jurisdiction of the Court, and especially to the exercise of that jurisdiction on the conditions for which Erastians contend. A clergyman, the Rev. P. Constable Ellis, who, as sheriff's chaplain, was thrown into close contact with Lord Chief Baron Kelly, himself one of the judges, says that that eminent judge has authorised him to give publicity to his opinion, that "the judgment was an iniquitous one ; *that it was not a judgment based upon law, but upon policy.*" That exactly expresses the conviction of the defeated party, and they are the more warranted in entertaining such a view because it has been continually maintained that the Judicial Committee were not to be bound by strict law. The only answer which the Primate has to give is, that Lord Hatherley is respected by every Churchman throughout the Empire. If this be meant as pleasantry, it is altogether out of place ; if it be intended as reasoning, it only shows that the Archbishop is deficient in that logical faculty for which his fellow-countrymen are distinguished.

But worst of all was the plea by which his Grace sought to reconcile recusants to the authority of Parliament in ecclesiastical matters. His arguments, or quasi-arguments, on the point must be quoted *in extenso* :—

"But then there are those Houses of Parliament. What in the world are we to do with them ? If we were living under his Imperial Highness the Sultan, and that it was this new Parliament which has just been assembled in Constantinople of which we were speaking, I could quite understand the sort of view which some take of the secularising and altogether injurious influence of the Parliament as compared with the Church ; but we have had Lord Nelson and Lord Midleton discoursing to us here on very important subjects of Church polity, and I do not know that either of them showed themselves as utterly secularised or as grossly ignorant in respect of the subjects on which they discoursed. We can only judge by the specimens which are brought before us, and my impression is that the House of Lords is not such an assembly as would be found in the Upper House of Representatives of his Imperial Majesty the Sultan. Then, with regard to the

House of Commons. Well, here is one member for the county sitting near me, and there, a little way off, is the other member for the county. There are other members of that body here. I hope they are all Christians. I have every reason to believe they are. I have the honour of knowing them both, and I have never heard it doubted, and I know that both of them vote in the majority of the House of Commons. But here is another member of the House of Commons beside me (Mr. Beresford Hope). He is a sort of *persona mixta*—half a Churchman, half a layman; but even the most lay of them seem to be Christians. Then, again, a gentleman who was, but is not now, in the House of Commons—a Queen's Counsel—a very excellent friend of mine, addressed you to-day. Some of you did not like his sentiments, but it is impossible to doubt that he is a Christian, and it was also apparent that he was a member of the National Church."

When we read these and other sentences of a similar drift, we ask ourselves, What estimate had the Archbishop got about his audience, or what judgment are we to form of him? If he was not in the clouds himself, he must have fancied that they were, and if he succeeded in convincing any of them, we must conclude that his notion was right. The Primate forgot the old proverb that "One swallow does not make a summer," or he could never have sought to impose upon intelligent and sincere men the absurd idea that one Beresford Hope could make a Christian Parliament. His apparent insensibility to the considerations which influence the objectors to Parliamentary control over the Church, its officers, its rubrics, its articles, and its discipline, and indeed, it would almost seem, his inability to comprehend his exact point and meaning, is one of the most unfortunate features in the case. "Who," he asks, "would consent to be a legislator in either House of Parliament if he thought he was to enter either assembly as a man enters the board-room of a railway company? Who that is worthy of the name of a representative of his fellow-countrymen does not feel himself constrained—as the prayers with which both Houses commence their deliberations remind him—to enter upon his duties under the deepest sense of responsibility which the religion he professes will allow?" Is it possible that the speaker can believe in his own words: that he can, with the facts before him, believe that all members of Parliament enter upon their duties under a sense of religious responsibility, and that earnest Churchmen can be satisfied, therefore, to entrust to a body composed of those acting under such principles, the control of their Church? The labour spent on these ideal pictures is sheer waste, for men look at the reality, and form their opinion from that. The clergy see that Parliament is made up, and is sure to be made up, of men of all creeds, and some of no creed. They know that while one constituency chooses a Beresford Hope, another may give its suffrages to a Bradlaugh, and not all the specious pleadings of Bishops will make

them careless to the indignity which the presence of such a man in the body which governs the Church must inflict on the Church itself. They know that if a Lord Cairns is Chancellor now, it is not long since a Westbury held the same position, and that the future may see the wool-sack occupied by one who has as little sympathy with the spiritual interests of the Church, and takes as much pleasure in gibes at the clergy and what they hold in deepest reverence, as the great antagonist of the late Bishop of Winchester. The Archbishop would have done wisely had he eschewed such a course of reasoning. It requires no cleverness to expose its weakness, and it irritates those whom it is meant to soothe, for nothing provokes men more than a feeling that their rulers cannot or will not understand them.

The general result is, that the Archbishop has gained no favour with the Ritualists, and yet he has served their cause only too well. The attacks of the *Church Times* upon his Grace were, if possible, more savage than usual. Canon Curteis told the Congress how he was disturbed and wounded by the falsehoods with which, week by week, the Liberation press "horribly befoul" things and persons most dear and sacred to Churchmen. He must be mistaken as to the papers which he reads. It is in Church journals that the abuse of Bishops is to be found, and in the comments on the Primate's speech the *Church Times* was true to its own reputation. "A well-known Church dignitary said to me after his Grace had sat down," says one of the correspondents of the journal, "'That's the speech of a most dangerous man.' I did not quite agree with him, because I have too much confidence in the Church of England [to believe that one like Archbishop Tait can be really dangerous, however much he may try to be mischievous." His Grace has clearly made no way with the extreme party, and yet he has done them material good by the very restraint he succeeded in placing on others. He has been aided in this, no doubt, by the desire of the leaders among the Evangelical clergy to uphold the Establishment. How much they are sacrificing to this end, they seem unable to perceive themselves. But, in fact, they could not more effectually serve the purposes of their opponents. If they secure tolerance it is all for which they can hope, for they understand well the effect of their appearance on Church platforms as accepted members of the Church in breaking down the feeling against them. If ever a party understood the virtues of courage and perseverance, it is Ritualists. They never cry "Peccavimus," never retreat a single inch, never abate one of their pretensions, quietly wait during times of popular agitation, and at the first lull take up some fresh ground, so that after all the conflicts of the last forty years, and the frequent resolution to put Ritualism down, they occupy a more advanced

position now than ever. It is due largely to their skilful tactics in thus keeping their ideas and practices continually before the eye of the world as part of the Church's system. They understand what seems to be overlooked by others, the truth underlying the poet's well-known lines :—

“Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,
That to be hated needs but to be seen ;
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

They are determined that the veil of mystery shall not hang around them. They talk and act as though they were the true representatives of the Anglican Church. Already they have broken down the barrier of feeling against the surplice as the preacher's robe ; they have accustomed congregations to surpliced choirs and similar accessories of an ornate ritual ; they have succeeded in investing the altar and the priest with a new sanctity ; and by and by they will, unless some decided action be taken, succeed in re-establishing the Confessional.

Our strong and deepening impression of the gravity of the perils makes us regard the issue of the Congress with extreme regret. We do not inquire here as to its effect upon Nonconformity. Nonconformity can stand a great deal more than the petty criticism, or foolish coaxings, or bitter diatribes with which the Congress saw fit to occupy the principal part of one of its sessions. It has had to endure things worse than Canon Ashwell's petty scandals about Dissent, or Mr. George Harwood's complacent flippancies ; worse than Canon Curteis's denunciations of the melancholy degeneracy which has come upon it during the last seven years ; worse even than the condescension of Canon Ryle, and those who may be induced to follow his example in the hope that they may extinguish Dissent by courtesies to Dissenting ministers. We are impenetrable alike to the bullyings and the coaxings, to the scoldings and the caresses, to the anathemas and the “flirtations.” We have our work to do and our testimony to bear, and, with God's help, we will stand in our place, and be found in our lot, regardless of frowns or smiles from Canons, Rectors, or even Bishops. We fancy a better occupation might have been found for the Congress than that to which the Friday morning was devoted. But that does not trouble us, except as it tells upon what is, in our view, of primary importance—the effect of the Congress action upon the interests of Anglican Protestantism.

The significant fact as bearing upon this is the evident determination of the Evangelical leaders to submit to anything rather than expose the Establishment to any danger. Liberationists seem to be more dreaded by them than Romanists, and they seem more afraid of intrusion into their graveyards than of the loss of that grand Protestant inheritance of

which they have often boasted so loudly. If anything could have broken the strange slumber, it would have been the present state of things ; but it has produced no effect. Canon Ryle, in particular, seems definitely to have committed himself to the policy of the Establishment at any price. It is not only that he cannot forgive the "political Dissenters" for the Burials' Bill, nor that he has such faith in the value of a State Church that he will fight for it as long as is practicable, but still holds in reserve some great principles which he will not abandon for it. He seems to have conceived an almost fanatical devotion to the Establishment, almost as strong as that of the Dean of Westminster. It is not only that he is intensely concerned about the possible fate of the rural districts under Disestablishment. He still has his note of warning, which he utters as to "the irreparable injury you would inflict on the rural districts, where the 'voluntary system' is confessedly a 'miserable failure ;'" for getting that where there has been failure at all, it has been due to the fact that the system has been worked by the poor. But his great objection to Disestablishment now is that it would throw power into the hands of a popular body, and would probably interfere with the comprehensiveness of the Church. Here are his words :—

"The frogs in the fable deposed King Log, as a dull stupid fellow. But they found in the end that they were far worse off under King Stork, who ate them up for dinner. A Disestablished Church must of course have a free and independent Synod, comprising laity as well as clergy. Such free and independent Synod is pretty sure to settle disputed questions in a very slashing cut-and-thrust fashion, and to allow very few differences of opinion. It might prove a very troublesome creature, which, once called into existence, would eat a good deal, and would make no bones of some of our schools of thought, though I know not which would be eaten up last or first. It would probably fit us with clothes so tight that they would be continually tearing. In short, Disestablishment would certainly be followed by disruption, and ultimately by the destruction of the Church of England. My own mind is made up. I certainly think the relations of Church and State might be improved. But I am resolved to put up with all the evils of our present position, before I join the cry for Disestablishment, both for the sake of my country and of the Church of England. I own I am a thorough-going Church reformer, and I am particularly anxious to see Convocation reformed ; but I am content to wait. I bide my time. I hold that the way of patience is better than the way of Disestablishment."

This from Canon Ryle ! He has no faith in freedom, in the government of the Church by its own members, in the inherent force of Evangelical truth. Alas for Protestantism, when those who stand forth as its champions have such imperfect hold of its fundamental principles, and believe that a system which was cradled in freedom, which lives and moves and has its being in freedom, can flourish when stifled by the atmosphere of Parliaments, and bound in the swaddling-clothes of State decrees and enactments.

THE LATE PROFESSOR HENRY ROGERS.

THE subject of the few following pages may be said to have been a literary man pure and simple. His professional work, though most faithfully and conscientiously done, made so small a demand upon his ample resources, that it rather blended with, than presented any contrast to, the general complexion of his life. We have in the present age an unusually large number of conspicuous men who display their powers in two, or even in many, arenas. Macaulay, Mill, and G. C. Lewis were champions in the field of letters first, active politicians second. The late Lord Derby, Lord Beaconsfield, and many more, have, on the other hand, subordinated literature to politics; while of others, even more illustrious, as for example Lord Brougham and Mr. Gladstone, it would perhaps be difficult to say on which field the most lasting laurels have been sought or won. In the same way, the medical, the military, and the legal professions have given us many brilliant stars in the firmament of letters; and even in the highest places on the roll of literary fame we find the names of men whose main energies have been devoted to some directly practical pursuit, while literature has been their honourable recreation. But Mr. Rogers, in devoting himself to literature, fulfilled the maxim, "This one thing I do." And he did it with a power and grace which, after we have made every allowance demanded by the too favourable prejudice of affection, leaves the unbiassed judgment ample ground for the faith that it will be long before the products of his pen shall fade out of sight. The life of a literary man is in this country seldom an eventful one, and that of Mr. Rogers was no exception to the rule. He held clearly defined views both in general politics and on politico-ecclesiastical questions; but with these topics he seldom meddled. It was with religious, philosophical, and social subjects, such as could be dealt with best in the quiet of the study, that he almost exclusively employed himself. His writings, indeed, frequently led to correspondence with public men; but he entered only those lists in which his aggressive weapon was the pen. His habits, too, were singularly retired, and hence his external life was one of a very quiet and even tenor, and marked with but little variety of incident.

He was born at St. Albans, in 1806. In due time he was sent to Mill Hill School, where he had the advantage of studying under Mr. Thorowgood, and who gave him the only solid education he ever received in his boyhood. Here he showed so great a fondness for study, and inclined so much more to reading than to recreation, that he needed admonitions to play, not to work. He soon showed proficiency in language, especially in Greek, of which at an unusually early period, aided by an excellent memory and by his love

for the study, he mastered a copious vocabulary. He began very soon to think for himself, and like all other lads of a similar turn, he indulged in literary composition. On leaving school his attention was directed to the medical profession, and though he soon forsook the studies that were intended to prepare him for it, he retained throughout his life a kindly feeling towards his first work and its allied sciences. The way in which he had been brought up made it natural that he should cherish religious feelings, and should seek to obey the rule of conscience. But it was the perusal of Howe's "*Redeemer's Tears wept over Lost Souls*" that formed a crisis in young Rogers' spiritual history. In his "*Life of Howe*," he remarks of this book that it "deservedly ranked amongst the most valuable pieces of practical divinity in the English language," and he continues to dwell for a page or two on the work in a way that shows his matured judgment confirmed his former impressions. Perhaps the fact of being thus in early life arrested by Howe's "profound yet simple pathos," may explain his attraction to the illustrious Puritan divine, though we suspect that it is more fully accounted for by similarity of temperament between the biographer and his subject. It is evident that a youth who would read and find profit in such a book as "*The Redeemer's Tears*" was already of an earnest and devout mind, but nevertheless it remains true that the spirit of John Howe powerfully touched and moulded that of Henry Rogers, and so bestowed on our own age a fine evidence of the undying power of the great Puritan revival. The determination to devote himself to the ministry of the Gospel was not formed without earnest and deliberate thought, nor until the clear conviction had been formed that *there* lay the path of duty. Had he been able to enter Oxford or Cambridge, there can be no doubt he would have made good use of the privileges they afforded, and would have distinguished himself and done honour to his Alma Mater. But the Church that repudiates the name of sect was then the most sectarian institution in the kingdom. The national universities were barred against half the nation. The great seats of learning were a select preserve, from which, however, many of the noblest spirits of the land were shut out. Henry Rogers in his youth was as steadfast in his Nonconformity as he remained to his life's end; he therefore betook himself to the Independent College at Highbury, entering that institution in the year 1826. There he enjoyed the friendship and profited by the instruction of the late Dr. Halley, the Theological tutor; and whatever may have been Rogers' loss in not repairing to a more famous spot, we believe that neither Oxford nor Cambridge could have furnished a man more fitted to impress a healthy, vigorous, and devout tone on any youthful mind than was found in Dr. Halley. Mr. Rogers pursued his studies at Highbury for the usual length of time

—about three years—and then became assistant-minister to Mr. Durant, of Poole, in Dorsetshire. He was, however, never ordained, and his ministerial career was abruptly cut short. While his general health remained good and even vigorous, it speedily became apparent that the throat, that all-important organ to a minister, would prove too weak an instrument for public purposes. Medical opinion was clear that chronic disease of the windpipe would ensue unless the work of the ministry was abandoned. As he had been led by an irresistible impulse to forsake the medical profession, so again and with equal distinctness, though this time strongly against his inclination, he is compelled to quit the calling he had chosen. Mr. Rogers therefore reluctantly gave up his engagement with Mr. Durant, and with that surrendered for ever all expectations of holding the pastoral office. But there can be no doubt that, though by a way he knew not, Mr. Rogers was thus directed into the one vocation for which his genius was fitted. From henceforth literature was his sole pursuit. He had, however, his living to get, and literature was too precarious to be wholly trusted. He removed to London in 1832, and in January, 1837, was appointed Professor of English Language and Literature in the recently-established University College. For this post both his taste and attainments well qualified him, and he entered with great alacrity upon that work of teaching which he was destined to follow for five-and-thirty years. He always regarded it as a happy coincidence, that some months previous to the offer or expectation of this professorship, he had devoted himself, with his dear friend Mr. Mackenzie, to the study of the Anglo-Saxon language. During his stay in London he wrote largely for the *Eclectic Review*, and we should be glad to see many of these early productions re-issued; for instance, articles relating to Christian organisations would be as relevant to-day as they were on their first publication. At this time also he was closely identified with the *Patriot* newspaper, of which Mr. Conder was then the editor. In 1837, "The Christian Correspondent" was published. This is a work in three small volumes, containing letters of eminent persons. Its compilation was a task requiring great care and labour. The work was originated by Mr. James Montgomery, but he was too much occupied to carry it out. He was therefore compelled to content himself with writing the preliminary essay, while he entrusted to Mr. Rogers the selection and arrangement of the materials. The selection was made from more than a hundred writers, and involved "a careful inspection of not less than forty volumes of correspondence and several hundred volumes of religious biography." In 1839, Mr. Rogers contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* the article on "The Structure of the English Language." Its appearance attracted much attention, and provoked wide inquiry as to who was the new light that had begun to

shine in the great Whig constellation. From that time, for fifteen years and more, Mr. Rogers was a constant contributor to the pages of the Review.

In 1840 he went to Birmingham, soon after the establishment of Spring Hill College in that town, having accepted the chair of Philosophical and Mathematical tutor. We may date from this period the beginning of that direct and valuable influence which, for five and thirty years, Mr. Rogers exercised upon the ministers of his own—the Congregational—denomination. It is not too much to say that his students look back to their distinguished tutor, not only with the gratitude of those who have enjoyed a signal privilege, but in very numerous cases with even enthusiastic reverence and affection.

Mr. Rogers left Spring Hill in 1858. During his professorship there, and in addition to the daily work of the college, he had contributed more than twenty articles to the *Edinburgh Review*, most of them very lengthy. A selection of these was made in 1850, and published in two octavo volumes. Five years afterwards a third volume was added, and the whole issued in a less costly form. Some of the best work was done in holiday time. The masterly essay on "Reason and Faith; their Claims and Conflicts," which may be taken as one of the author's ablest as well as most useful productions, was written amongst the wild beauties of the Isle of Arran during the summer vacation of 1849. But these contributions to the *Edinburgh* were far from exhausting Mr. Rogers' efforts. The "Eclipse of Faith" appeared in 1852, and two years afterwards was followed by the "Defence," which was written as a rejoinder to Professor Newman. The ninth edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" was in process of publication, and Mr. Rogers contributed to its pages. The article on Butler, in the sixth volume, is from his pen, and is specially worthy of careful study. Thus the eighteen years at Spring Hill were years of hard reading and writing. Mr. Rogers was in the full play of his powers, and was in the prime of his faculties, while he enjoyed the society of dear and valued friends, as well as a connection of unbroken happiness with his fellow tutors and his students.

From Spring Hill he removed to Manchester, where he succeeded Dr. Vaughan as Principal of the Lancashire Independent College. He remained in that office till 1869, and for two years longer continued to lecture as Professor of Dogmatic Theology and Philosophy. If his duties in the Lancashire College prevented the fertility of former years, he wrote quite enough to show that his weapon was not blunted. The *British Quarterly Review* profited by his pen. Several essays appeared in *Good Words*, and were afterwards collected and published in one volume; and, we believe, also the introductory essay accompanying the Tract Society's edition of "Lyttleton's Letter on St. Paul" was

written at this time. In 1871 Mr. Rogers finally withdrew from professorial responsibilities. He was singularly sensitive to the fear that he might linger too long in the attempt to fulfil duties for which he was unequal; and he enjoined more than one intimate friend to inform him, without scruple, should he unconsciously begin to fail. But, happily, no such painful task was necessary. The Congregational Lecture for the year 1873, written after he had left Lancashire, is quite enough to prove that his right hand had not forgotten its cunning. Mr. Rogers was unanimously selected to deliver this, the first lecture of the new series. He chose for his theme "The Superhuman Origin of the Bible, inferred from itself," and, as doubtless all our readers know, it betrays no sign of failing power. For the last few years Mr. Rogers lived at Pennel Tower, near Machynlleth, and there, after an illness that had indeed been long upon him, but that grew rapid at its end, he quietly breathed his last on Monday, August 20th, in the present year, and in the seventy-first year of his age.

We cannot attempt to give a complete biography of Mr. Rogers. We must leave altogether untouched his private life. But could we lift the veil, it would be seen that he knew more than most men what it was to tread the valley of sorrow. He experienced heavy bereavements, which, on a nature as sensitive and affectionate as his, pressed with peculiar force. We must be content with but one reference. Amongst the companions of the past there was no name more dear than that of Morell Mackenzie. Mackenzie had been one of Mr. Durant's assistants at Poole, and he and Rogers were irresistibly drawn to one another. Mackenzie's intellectual powers were of the highest order. His memory, for example, was rivalled—Mr. Rogers doubted whether it was excelled—only by that of Lord Macaulay. But it was higher qualities in Mackenzie, which Rogers in a little unpublished memoir of his friend so well portrays, that formed the link—soon to be broken, but now, we doubt not, for ever united—between the two friends. Mackenzie perished at the wreck of the *Pegasus*, the victim—or rather the hero—of his own self-sacrificing devotion. He was an excellent swimmer and could easily have saved himself, but he chose to rescue other lives and to give up his own. It is not surprising that the loss of such a friend, and in circumstances that appealed with so much pathos to every emotion of admiration and of love, should have cast a life-long shadow, even while upon the memory of Mackenzie there rested a halo of peculiar and sacred beauty. Mr. Rogers had too much courage, and too much trust in God, to prevent that enfeebling result of grief which is often seen. It is interesting to notice that he worked with sustained diligence when, as he says, his "hearth was desolate." Such was his condition under another heavy and almost crushing bereavement

in 1835. And it was in that year that he wrote his "Life of Howe," dedicating it "to the kind friend under whose roof the greater part of it was composed." This friend was the late Mr. John Brown, of Parkstone, near Poole. Our space also forbids us saying anything of Mr. Rogers' friendship or acquaintance with several of the foremost literary men of his time. His intercourse with Dr. Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, and Lord Macaulay—to both of whom he dedicates his *Edinburgh Review* essays,—and with Lord Jeffrey—of whom he says, "whose most spontaneous kindness to myself I shall not easily forget,"—and with Dr. Norman Macleod, and many others of hardly less celebrity, must be passed by. Many of them played a more prominent, though none of them a more honourable, and but few a more useful, part than Mr. Rogers. His reminiscences of them were always interesting and always generous.

Mr. Rogers was a man of an extreme sociable disposition. He was genial to a degree that made him the most charming of companions. His retentive memory, his keen sense of humour, the quickness of his wit, his ready and felicitous expression, and his remarkable ingenuity, combined to endow him with conversational powers rarely surpassed. It was said of Dr. Johnson, "when his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it." One sometimes was reminded of this when hearing some repartee of our late friend. But he was kindness itself, and his ingenuity was not more conspicuous in tossing his adversary's sword into the air, than it was in abstaining from the infliction upon him of any humiliation. We may apply to him the language which one of his correspondents uses of Lord Jeffrey: "Did you know him? If you did, I need not say you loved him even more than you admired him. If you did not, you cannot know how worthy of love he was, how full of grace as well as gifts."

Along with this natural companionableness of disposition, Mr. Rogers possessed an uncommon shrinking from publicity, and a dislike, amounting to a strong repugnance, to being made a lion of. Perhaps it was his singularly retiring disposition, and the large degree in which he possessed the modesty of true greatness, that led to his preference for anonymous rather than avowed authorship. His *Edinburgh Review* essays were of course anonymous, but so also he chose should be the "Eclipse of Faith." "Greyson's Letters" appeared with the *nom de plume* R. E. H. Greyson, being an anagram (not quite perfect) of his own name. But we suspect that his choice in this matter is more satisfactorily to be accounted for by his desire that the mind of no reader should be prejudiced by the knowledge that the author was a Nonconformist. On one occasion a curious result ensued from the suppression of his name. When the "Eclipse of Faith" appeared, a doughty champion of the Truth, misled by the title and not look-

ing at the contents, announced the work as "another weapon from the armoury of the infidel." But if Mr. Rogers had the modesty of true genius, he was without those eccentricities by which genius is often rendered unlovely. He had no contempt for the requirements of courtesy, no roughness of manner, no indifference to the sensibilities of other people. Still less had he any affectation. He was exempt from all such infirmities. He taught that they should be avoided, and he practised what he taught. Nor was he tolerant of the notion that *haste* was any mark of genius; he had the faculty of great patience, and sometimes it was put to rather a severe test. He was appointed, along with Mr. Baden Powell and Mr. Isaac Taylor, to adjudicate the prize for the Burnett Essays—an undertaking of the most tedious kind, which Mr. Rogers went through with conscientious and even superfluous minuteness. In his own productions, though he was an extremely rapid writer, he never appeared in print without an amount of patient revision that made him no favourite with the compositors, but may well serve as an example to men of feebler powers than his. But perhaps the finest illustration that his genius never scorned the most patient toil, is found in his edition of his revered and beloved John Howe. The labour involved in this task can only be understood by those who have compared Howe, before Rogers' re-editing, with Howe after it. Even to *his* patience the task, we suspect, would have been too great, had he not had the assistance of more than one friendly amanuensis. Dr. Chalmers said that he gained more from John Howe than from all other theologians put together. If this estimate of Howe has any approach to truth, Mr. Rogers has placed the whole Christian Church under lasting obligation by his labour of love. We believe that Mr. Rogers' great patience was not constitutional, but was the result of a conscientious discipline and of a determination which rendered it all the more praiseworthy. He was sometimes pleased to say that he had a sluggish mind, and that it needed goading to its work. It may have been so, though no one else would have supposed it; but certainly he so effectually overcame the sluggishness that we hold him to have been a model of conscientious industry. He had, in truth, a great deal of resoluteness in his nature. This was shown in his consistent adherence to the principles of Nonconformity throughout his life. He declined more than one tempting offer of emolument and of distinction, rather than even appear to cast any doubt on his true ecclesiastical position. He was a Nonconformist by conviction, and no apparent advantages could lure him from the straight path. His articles on the Tractarian controversy led to an offer of a living in the Church, from a dignitary who too hastily assumed that none but a clergyman could have penned such essays. But Mr. Rogers aimed at no such prizes. He was well

content without them, in the possession of a freedom and independence which none knew better how to appreciate and to employ.

As a teacher, Mr. Rogers not only displayed that patience to which we have referred, and that power of luminous exposition which all who are acquainted with his writings will know he pre-eminently possessed, but he had also the more valuable art of making every subject he touched instinct with interest. His wide reading gave him great wealth of material, and enabled him to illuminate the matter in hand with many side lights. While he opened the gates into the boundless domain of literature, he inspired his students with an ardent desire to explore the wealthy land, and to make some of its treasures their own. At the same time he never failed to keep his disciples in mind that, in the vocation to which they were dedicated, no intellectual attainment could be a substitute for the knowledge that maketh wise to salvation; and that no literary taste could take the place of spiritual Christian impulse.

As an author, Mr. Rogers dealt with a vast variety of subjects. Some of these topics are of such a character that their interest cannot be enduring. Some of them—as, for instance, his essays that appeared in 1847 on “Treatment of Criminals” and on “Prevention of Crime”—have already become in a great degree obsolete, just because his suggestions have been largely adopted. Others, for the same reason, will probably soon fall into the same category. The article on the Marriage of a Deceased Wife’s Sister is destined, no doubt, to this happy oblivion. Others, again, may possibly suffer precisely the same fate for the very opposite reason—because the opinions expressed can no longer be entertained. No doubt Mr. Rogers sometimes gave utterance to views which subsequent knowledge has corrected, and he occasionally uttered prophecies which have not been fulfilled. He was in some respects too conservative and too sceptical; but, to give only one or two illustrations, we know that his earlier estimate of Oliver Cromwell was much modified in the great Protector’s favour by the increased light of recent years; and, again, that he gladly acknowledged that science had surprised him in its achievement of what he had regarded as the impossible feat of sending the electric current through the depths of the Atlantic. But when we make deductions for waning interest in some of the subjects that employed his pen, as well as for those errors from which no mortal is free, we are confident that there is more than enough salt in his writings to preserve them for a long time to come. The modern disciple of Plato will never turn without profit to Mr. Rogers’ article on that foremost philosopher of the Greeks, and he will see there how warm a reverence for pagan excellence could be cherished by a theologian whom some have regarded as orthodox almost to narrowness. Pascal, Des Cartes, Leibnitz, and Locke—whose genius

Mr. Rogers has criticised and exhibited with rare felicity and power—can be studied with great advantage under his guidance; and many “worthies” besides Thomas Fuller, and whose memory the world would not be content just yet to lose, own not a little of their worth’s attractiveness to the skill of the essayist’s setting.

But we think it is not in the realm of mental philosophy or of general literature, that we must look for Mr. Rogers’ more lasting successes. Nor is it as a commentator or critic of other men that his genius is most conspicuous. It is rather in dealing with those questions that relate to the ceaseless conflict between Christianity and unbelief that Mr. Rogers principally excels. In this controversy, in which all his life he bore a part, he was no doubt compelled to grapple with individual writers, but a whole school of thought was his quarry, quite irrespective of the person who for a time might be its most prominent champion. “The Eclipse of Faith” undoubtedly owes some of its characteristic features to Newman’s “Phases;” the invaluable essay on “Reason and Faith” is in the same way related to Strauss; and at a later date Renan gave occasion for special individual criticism. But *there the argument is*, presented with masterly ability, and standing on the firm basis of unchanging reason. The conflict Christianity has to wage may shift its ground from time to time, but it will be long before it is likely to get away from the places where Mr. Rogers fought, and for some time to come the honest doubter and the theological student will do well to consult his pages. Mr. Rogers was an unsparing censor of those who affect to look down on Christianity as an effete superstition, while at the same time they are drawing from it everything that makes their own position tolerable, or that gives to their principles the least semblance of dignity and virtue. The flippancy and indifferentism of the present age are often the subject of his keenest satire, though no man could be more ready to encourage inquiry and to resist the dogmas of mere authority. He very justly says: “The spurious charity which, with mincing speech, affects to treat all opinions with latitudinarian indulgence, and chatters its vague nonsense about their being equally innocent, is only one degree less hateful than the bigotry which converts hostility to erroneous opinions into a pretext for personal malignity, and substitutes for the tactics of honourable controversy the savage cruelties of the tomahawk and scalping-knife.”

It has frequently been a help to the young to witness his fidelity and his calm courage while many were forsaking the Christian faith; and we believe that his writings will long continue to shine as a bright light by which uncertain footsteps may be guided to safety and to peace. He will not soon be forgotten by those who on either side

concern themselves in the conflict he so well describes: "Age after age, in the very bosom of Christianity, adversaries appear who again and again repeat the same story of the same 'historic incredibilities,' and make no progress. They are confronted by men fully their equals in all respects, who tell them that they are egregiously mistaken. Generation after generation of the opponents of Christianity, with their books, go to the bottom and are forgotten, and men still obstinately believe the New Testament true, its miracles facts, and its doctrines divine! You will say, 'And have not their adversaries gone, too?' Very likely; but that which the one attacked and the other defended remains; it still goes forth with its many voices in all languages of the earth, 'conquering, and to conquer.'"

Few, we think, will be inclined to dispute that Mr. Rogers is a master of style. He has not many equals in the splendid use he can make of his native tongue; and on this account alone, if there were no other reasons, he will have a worthy niche in the literary history of his country. His exquisite art gives a finish to his compositions which constitutes one important element in their charm. He is never slovenly, never inelegant. He is a disputant who shows us how far vigour can be from roughness, and how possible—we do not say how easy—it is to be forcible without being discourteous. It is seldom that we need be at any loss as to his meaning. He sometimes grew impatient with men who were too indolent or too affected to make themselves intelligible, and he was certainly singularly successful in avoiding the fault he condemned. Heavy, cumbrous souls, themselves destitute of wit, have sometimes censured Mr. Rogers for levity and for his free use of banter and ridicule. It is but just to let him, on this point, speak for himself: "For the apparent levity with which I have treated some doctrines which I most conscientiously believe pernicious errors; doctrines which many persons would fain render invulnerable to *every* mode of assault—to satire, by representing them as too sacred for ridicule, and to argument, by representing them as too mysterious for reason,—I can offer no apology; being fully and calmly convinced that it is the only style effectually adapted to dispel the false halo of *pseudo-sacred* associations with which so many minds invest them." No one who knew the writer of this sentence, and no one who will candidly read such of his works as relate to sacred themes, can doubt that he had a profoundly reverent mind; and we suspect the criticism to which we have just referred springs much more from those who are glad to find any stone to cast at one whose arguments they cannot overthrow, than from those who are really troubled at what they affect to lament. We confess it is difficult to understand how any critic can suspect of irreverence the man who

can write with the pathos and the power displayed in the paragraph with which we shall close our notice, and which is but a specimen of many that are scattered throughout his volumes. It gives us the key of his whole philosophical and religious position. He was, before anything else, a servant of Jesus Christ. In early manhood, as we have seen, he was compelled to fall out of the ranks of the professional ministry. But he was a faithful minister of the New Testament, though he exercised his vocation not by his voice, but by his pen. His sound judgment, his masculine intellect, his vivid imagination, his vast attainments, and his accomplished literary skill, were all consecrated to the highest service; and, as hundreds can already testify, were not consecrated in vain. All were ungrudgingly employed in the endeavour to vindicate and to exhibit the "Bright Excellence" of the Founder of Christianity whose life and death are recorded in the New Testament, and "on which so many millions of minds have dwelt with unmingled love and veneration. If only a picture, still it is a picture with which no history nor fiction besides furnishes us; in which Power and Wisdom—usually the exclusive gods of man's idolatry—are, *for once*, subordinated to perfect Love. It is the picture of One gentle towards the infirmities and follies of man, patient with his waywardness, lovingly forgetful of his wrongs; of One—and, oh! how beautiful, if *only* a fable!—who never broke 'the bruised reed,' who came to 'bind up the broken-hearted, to give deliverance to the captive,' to welcome penitents to His feet, and to offer the 'weary rest;' of One who sided unchangeably with weakness and suffering against strong-handed oppression, whose patience was proof against every insult to Himself and whose indignation never gleamed forth but twice, and was then only extorted by that comprehensive sympathy with humanity which was the burden and passion of His existence; once when, mingled with grief, it shot a momentary flash on the censorious hypocrites who grudged and murmured at His mercy to the wretched, and once when it gathered in thunder-clouds, and launched its vivid bolts over the guilty abodes of those who had perverted every law, divine and human, to the purpose of oppressing and grinding their fellow-creatures, who 'for a pretence made long prayers,' 'devoured widows' houses,' 'took away the key of knowledge,' 'sat in Moses' seat,' and made it the Devil's throne. In a word, it is a picture of One whose whole life was one long yearning agony of sympathy with the guilt and sorrows of humanity, and whose death—ah! how strange! how passing strange it is, that any should have an ungentle word to say of *Him*, even though only a picture. Is it not a picture which, if the original never existed, we should long to *see* realised?—one from which we should turn away, after long and entranced contemplation, and sighing, say—

"Oh, that those lips had language!"

DAVID COX.

"DEAR old David Cox!" This is the phrase in which those who knew him best and closest sum up their estimate of the man—his life, his character, and his works. What better memorial could any of us wish for? "Dear old David Cox!"—dear in his quiet simplicity, his modesty, his steady friendship, his intense love and unceasing practice of Art, his mastery of the deep secrets of nature, his marvellous industry, skill, and variety in translating them for those of us who stand reverently and humbly in the porch of the great temple.

It seems a little startling, considering how well he was known to so many still living, to remember that it is nearly a hundred years ago since David Cox first drew breath, and seventeen years since he was laid in his long sleep, side by side with his wife, in the peaceful churchyard at Harborne. It is startling, because he seems to be so near us, to live so vividly in the minds of those who knew him, to be so fresh and homely amongst us in his works.

Apart from the progress of these works there is not much to tell about him. Cox's was a very quiet and uneventful life. Throughout the seventy-six years of it there is scarcely an incident which the ordinary biographer would count as useful material, or would contrive to present in the picturesque form required to interest the ordinary reader. Portrayed by those who knew David Cox only by hearsay, it seems a dull, prosaic, humdrum kind of life. But others who knew him intimately, who understood and loved the *man* as well as the artist, can make his life a record of most delightful reading. Such a narrative has been written by one of his closest friends, Mr. William Hall, a member of the Birmingham Society of Artists, a poet gifted with a true love of nature, and an artist imbued with much of Cox's own spirit. Mr. Hall's work is still in MS., but he kindly put it at the disposal of the present writer; and as the worthiest tribute to Cox's genius, and as an act of justice to the author, it should some day be published.

David Cox had no advantage of birth, wealth, or early training. He sprang from what is called a humble origin. His father, Joseph Cox, was a workman—a Birmingham whitesmith; his mother, Frances Walford, was the daughter of a miller, who had the once familiar windmill on Holloway Head. The couple lived in Heath Mill Lane, Deritend; and here, on the 29th of April, 1783—when Birmingham was a much smaller and less important place than it is now—their son David was born.

Such education as he had was obtained, first at a dame school, and

then for a short period at the Free Grammar School ; but from the latter the lad was withdrawn—as soon as he could fairly use a file or wield a hammer—to follow his father's business. David, however, did not like the whitesmith's work, nor was he strong enough for it. His great desire was to be an artist—the natural bent of his mind, very early disclosed. Even as a child he liked to draw. At seven years old an accident gave him a chance. The poor little fellow fell over a scraper, and broke his leg. To relieve the tedium of confinement, a cousin named Allport, a painter, gave him a colour-box, which he straightway put to use, and thus found, even in infancy, his true vocation. When the whitesmith's work became distasteful to the lad, Joseph Cox proved himself to be a kind and wise father. He did not strive, as many fathers do, to fight against nature ; but, adapting himself to circumstances, he apprenticed David to an artist named Fieldler, a miniature painter, and sent him to Mr. Joseph Barber's school to learn drawing ; Samuel Lines and Joseph and Charles Barber, well-known Birmingham artists, being amongst his fellow-pupils. This teaching at Mr. Barber's was all the regular instruction Cox had in drawing : he learnt the rest from observation, from continual practice, and from the intelligent study of the works of other painters, as an aid to the lessons of his great school—that of Nature herself. It was, however, an uphill fight for him.

When he was eighteen he found himself thrown upon his own resources. Mr. Fieldler, his master, committed suicide by hanging, and Cox had to find another employer. The transition he actually made was a strange one. From the delicate work of miniature-painting, he went to the theatre, and took to scene-painting. Not all at once, however, for his first occupation was the very humble business of grinding the colours ; the scene of his labours being the Birmingham Theatre Royal, then under the management of Mr. Macready, the father of the great tragedian. The chief scene painter, Mr. De Maria, a London artist in that business, seems to have been a man who was worth studying ; obviously, from what is remembered of him, a good colourist, a bold draughtsman, and having a broad manner, which no doubt contributed to form Cox's own style. It is certain that Cox always entertained a high opinion of De Maria, spoke of him in later years with much affection, was delighted at an accidental meeting with him, and acknowledged freely his obligations to the old Frenchman. After a time spent in the scene-loft as colour-grinder, Cox himself took to the work of painting scenery. His first effort was the portrait of an actress—a decoration wanted in a hurry, and executed by him in De Maria's absence. This proved so successful that he was entrusted with the production of the scenery generally ; and it is on record that while so

engaged he painted a set of miniature scenes for a toy theatre belonging to William Charles Macready. Three years were occupied in this way, Cox becoming a regular member of the establishment, going about with it from town to town, and occasionally taking part in the business of the stage as a "super." On one occasion, he used to relate, he actually played pantaloons in the pantomime. He did not like the business, however, neither the associations connected with it, nor the man he had to serve, for the elder Macready was one of the worst-tempered people in the world, and his language was characterised much more by force than elegance. Mrs. Cox also objected to the theatre—she feared for the morals of her son; and so, through his mother's anxiety and his own discomfort, David gave up the theatre, and went to London, with the view of obtaining work as a scene painter at Astley's. This was in 1804, when he was about twenty-one. His lodging in London was in a bye-street at Lambeth, in the house of Mrs. Ragg, a widow with two daughters, one of whom, Mary Ragg, a quiet, intelligent woman, some years his senior, he married four years later. Just now, however, he was not in a position to risk marriage. There was his living to get, and the task was by no means easy. The promised opening at Astley's did not occur, and Cox had to turn his attention elsewhere. He set to work to make drawings in sepia and Indian-ink—copies for country drawing-masters—and these he sold to printsellers at the modest price of two guineas a dozen. Another artist, destined also to be famous, was doing the same thing. His name was Samuel Prout, and so limited was the field of sale, that he and Cox agreed to deal with separate printsellers, in order not to clash with each other, and so to bring down prices. During this period Cox worked hard to improve himself as an artist. He drew always and everything—landscape, shipping, figures, whatever, indeed, came in his way. For one thing he copied an oil picture of Gaspar Poussin; for another, he took lessons of the then chief water-colour painter, John Varley, for which he paid ten shillings a lesson. This payment, however, soon stopped. "I hear that you are an artist, Mr. Cox," Varley said to him one day. "No, sir," replied modest David; "I am only trying to become one." "Well, then," was Varley's answer, "come and see me draw as often as you please; I cannot take any more of your money." It was a thoughtful and generous action, and one that made a deep impression on Cox's mind. In after years he often gave lessons to young artists with equal cheerfulness,—lessons more precious even than those which Varley gave to him. Four years passed in this humble unpromising way, Cox still improving himself by incessant work—including a sketching tour in Wales in 1805, his first visit to the ground he was afterwards to make famous. In 1808 he was still

glad to paint scenery for the theatre. Mr. Solly, in his "Life of Cox," quotes a bill made out in that year to Mr. Stretton, of the Wolverhampton Theatre :—

1808.	DR.	
February 15th.	Mr. Stretton to David Cox, to painting	
310 yards of scenery, at 4s. per square yard...		£62 os. od.

A rough beginning this, 4s. per square yard, for a man whose works are now reckoned at guineas by the inch ! Perhaps the £62 put David in heart—it was a great deal of money for him then—for he now undertook the responsibilities of married life by taking Mary Ragg for better or worse. Happily, it was for better. She is described as a "slight, gentle, delicate woman," with much literary taste, cheerful in disposition, hopeful in temperament, having a strong affection for Art, and being an honest and useful critic of her husband's works—criticism, however, based on genuine appreciation of them. The newly-married couple set up their home in a little cottage on the edge of Dulwich Common, and here they remained until the year 1813, making occasional visits to Birmingham to see David's father. The first of these visits was in 1809, when Cox had the pleasure of showing his parents not his wife only, but the baby, his own son David. On this visit, his old friend, Mr. Edward Everitt, relates that Cox gave him lessons, and that these were interrupted by the artist having to get up and nurse the baby. During the five years he lived at Dulwich, Cox had a hard struggle. Drawings would not sell ; the war made bad trade ; bad trade was hurtful to artists. Indeed, the war nearly ruined poor David, for he was drawn for the militia. He went to be sworn in, for purchase of a substitute was out of the question. He escaped, however, in the following manner, as related by Mr. Hall :—

"Listening at the foot of the office stairs before going up, he was terrified at the proceedings. There were a large number of persons who had been drawn like himself, and he heard all sorts of reasons assigned by the unwilling why they should be excused serving. A neighbour of Cox's was one of these, and the artist distinctly heard him tell the most deliberate falsehood to get liberated, which had the desired effect, for his name was struck off the list. When Cox's turn came to be sworn in, he told the officer what were his position and prospects—that it would be his utter ruin if he were taken from the pursuit of his art—and urged every reason he could think of why he should be released. All was of no avail. He was told that he *must* serve. This so exasperated Cox, that he exclaimed to the official, "You would have let *me* off if *I* had told you a lie !" and then he rushed from the place in disgust. He was now determined that he would not serve, and so he quitted his residence at once, hiding in various parts of the country, until he considered it fairly safe to venture back again. For a long time he was continually in dread of being apprehended as a deserter."

It was all the more provoking, this difficulty, because things had become somewhat easier with him. He tried teaching for a living, taking perspective, on Mrs. Cox's recommendation, as a beginning. His first proceeding was to buy a copy of Euclid's Problems; his next to put a notice in the window, "Perspective Taught Here." A few pupils came, and Cox hoped to be a lesson ahead of them. But Euclid bothered him, and, getting disgusted with it, the perplexed artist flung his book against the wall. It was only a lath-and-plaster partition, and Euclid broke through and fell into a lumber place. In after years Cox used to tell the story, and to say with a laugh, "There it is now." Perspective gave way to more congenial teaching. Colonel Windsor, afterwards Earl of Plymouth, saw some of Cox's drawings at a print-seller's, and expressed a wish to take lessons from him. He rode over one Sunday morning to the Dulwich cottage to make arrangements, and stopped so long that a neck of mutton roasting for dinner was burnt to a cinder, and filled the little place with its odour. Colonel Windsor proved to be a good pupil. He introduced Cox to many persons of his acquaintance, who were glad to take lessons and to buy drawings, and thus the struggling artist had the means of living comfortably put within his reach. He desired, however, to find something more settled than casual teaching, and this desire led him, in 1813—the year, by the way, in which he was elected a member of the Water Colour Society—to accept the appointment of drawing-master at the Military College at Farnham. The post was well paid, the society pleasant, the pupils distinguished—Sir William Napier was one of them—but the residence at the College, the discipline, and the dull routine of the work were distasteful to Cox; he could not endure the abridgment of his liberty, or the separation from his wife and child, entailed by residence in the College. In twelve months, therefore, he gave up the appointment, and was once more adrift again. It was not for long, for in the next year he engaged with a Miss Crowder, a boarding-school mistress at Hereford, to remove to that city to teach in her school, with leave to give other lessons and to pursue his art generally.

His life at Hereford lasted for thirteen years, from 1814 until 1827. It was quiet, uneventful, laborious, and occasionally anxious, but not unprofitable in a pecuniary sense, and richly and largely productive in regard to Art. The scenery of Herefordshire and Monmouthshire supplied abundant materials for study, and these were varied by visits to Wales, and by a continental journey, in which Cox noted with his accustomed care and diligence the picturesque features of the north of France, of Belgium, and of Holland. His affections, however, were centred in the scenery of his own country; it was, he used to say, quite good enough for him; and so charmed was the artist with Here-

fordshire and its neighbourhood, that he seems to have thought of making it his home for life. His first residence was a little cottage just outside Hereford—a place with a thatched roof and a stone floor. Then he removed, in 1817, to another cottage in Parry's Lane, and thence, about five years later, to a house which he built on the brow of Ailstone Hill. "It was," Mr. Hall says, "a pretty little cottage, designed by Cox himself, with all an artist's taste for the picturesque. It had a thatched roof, overhanging the walls, with a verandah, also thatched, running nearly round the building, about which were trained roses and flowering creeping plants; there was a carriage-drive in front, and a well-stocked garden in the rear; altogether it was a very charming abode." When Cox left Hereford he sold this house at a satisfactory profit, for about a thousand pounds. The purchaser was a West Indian planter, who had made a fortune at Berbice; he took a fancy to Cox's cottage, bought it without haggling, took possession, and altered its name to Berbice Cottage. When the settlement came to be made, there were a few shillings to be returned to the planter. Cox searched his pockets for the requisite sum. "Never mind the change, Mr. Cox," said the purchaser, "you can give me five or six of your little drawings for the balance!" He really meant it, Cox said, in telling the story; and in fact the proposal was not so unreasonable, for the drawings did not sell very well at that time, the whole batch exhibited at the Water Colour Society's rooms often coming back unsold. On one occasion, indeed, Cox grew angry at his want of success, and literally withdrew his works from the chance of purchase by going round the rooms and marking them all "sold" off-hand.

The year 1827 saw Cox back in London, at No. 9, Foxley Road, Kennington Common; and here he remained until 1841, when he removed to Harborne. This period of fourteen years was spent in the manner to which he had become accustomed as his mode of life—bringing out drawing-books for the publishers, going through the daily drudgery of giving lessons, painting incessantly, and exhibiting with only a very moderate success in the way of sale. It is almost pathetic to look back at the prices he got at this time—twenty guineas was a large sum—and at the want of appreciation of his work: his broad style being hateful to those who mistook what they called "finish" for artistic excellence. Cox was too modest to repine at his slow success: the fault, he fancied, was more in him than in the picture-buyers. But, under adverse circumstances, his courage supported him, courage born of the consciousness of power and the intense love of nature. He had compensations which were denied to others who obtained a larger measure of profit—a few attached friends, good company amongst artists, such, for example, as Müller, Turner, and Prout. The unflinching confidence and

appreciation of a few intimates in Birmingham, notably Mr. William Roberts, a brilliant amateur artist Mr. Charles Birch, then a distinguished patron of Art ; Mr. Edward Everitt ; and Mr. William Radclyffe, an engraver who conferred honour upon the town ; and he had also delightful periods of communion with nature in some of the most picturesque spots in the kingdom, such, for instance, as Haddon—"dear old Haddon," as he used to call it—Bolton, Rowsley, Lancaster Sands, the Lakes, Wales, and other places which his pencil has recorded and enriched. Altogether, it was not an unsatisfactory kind of life ; but in time Cox tired of it. Like all true Birmingham men, the old town had a strong and abiding and growing hold upon his affections, and he longed to get back to it. So, in 1841, in his fifty-eighth year, he made his final change of residence, and took up his abode at Harborne, at Greenfield House, which he occupied until he was carried to his last resting-place in the village churchyard hard by.

Greenfield has been much altered from the time when Cox took it. Then it was a quiet, pleasant cottage, in a rural lane, with meadows and open country all about it. It was a modest dwelling—a parlour on the ground-floor, with a bow-window ; a smaller room behind, a kitchen, and upstairs a barely-furnished studio, approached by the kitchen staircase. The garden was large, and well filled with trees—young forest trees, an avenue of filbert bushes, a willow grown from slips cut from the tree overhanging Napoleon's tomb at St. Helena (Cox planted this and was very proud of it) and all kinds of broad-leaved plants, docks, hollyhocks, and Scotch thistles, for which he had a particular liking. One charm of the house, in Cox's eyes, was that in the kitchen there were "plenty of hooks on which to hang up bacon and hams ;" it suited his homeliness of character, and his preference for solid unostentatious comfort rather than ornamental show. In his quiet cottage at Harborne, Cox's home-life passed with a quiet, even flow : his motto, in life as in art being like Goethe's, "Unhasting, unresting ;" never any trace of unhealthy excitement, never any cessation from the labour which he loved. Even in the society of friends he still worked. When out for the sketching season—at Bettws, or elsewhere—he was occupied from morning till night ; at home at Harborne it was the same. Mr. Hall graphically describes him in both aspects. Writing of the Harborne life, he says :—

"David Cox passed a very quiet life at Harborne. One day was spent very much like another. Soon after breakfast he went upstairs into his painting-room, and worked upon the picture in hand, or turned over his sketches to fix upon a subject for one about to be commenced. Then he would come down, and if the day were fine, would walk about his garden for a few minutes, noting the growth of vegetables, fruits, and flowers, and indulging in the half cigar of which he was so fond. Then up again to

work, till dinner was ready, about half-past one o'clock. Occasionally he would walk as far as Birmingham, to do a little marketing, to call on friends, or deliver small pictures which had been commissioned by his patrons. After dinner he would take a few more whiffs of a cigar—perhaps a short nap—then up again to work till tea-time. After tea, friends perhaps dropped in, to sit an hour or two with him, to bring the news from town, and look over his portfolios of drawings; one of the party becoming showman for the night, placing the drawings one after another on the small table easel, while the other friends, with the old man himself among them, sat in a semi-circle looking at the beautiful transcripts of nature, and making their remarks. If alone, he lighted his lamp when the evenings were long and dark, and went to work again—down stairs this time, and in his usual sitting room—taking up a sheet of rough paper, which he delighted to paint on; and, striking out some grand effect of sun and shadow, of cloud and tempest, which his quickened fancy enabled him to conceive, produced what he called a 'cartoon'—a subject to be treated with greater care, in another form on some future occasion."

At Bettws, in his sketching season—for Bettws was his favourite field, a veritable "Cox's Land"—his mode of life was equally simple. He was to be found always at the "Royal Oak," not then, as now, a great hotel, but a humble village inn, supplying board and lodging at a guinea a week. Here Cox was master, and at home.

"Whoever," says Mr. Hall, "might be staying in the house, he invariably occupied the best bedroom—a double-bedded room—and made use of both beds, one to sleep in, the other to lay his drawings upon. He was a sort of little king at Bettws, and was waited on, respected, and beloved by all who came in contact with him. My Lord Willoughby might be owner of the soil, but David Cox was lord of the people's affections. Many a kind thing has been done for him by the poor residents about the place; and many a kindness has he rendered to them in return. His arrival was always marked by small presents of tobacco for the smokers, and of pocket-knives for the boys; and old women acquaintances were speedily set to work to knit woollen stockings for the winter wear of himself and his friends. There was always a great contention among the lads of the village as to who should be his 'tiger,' to carry the sketching apparatus for the season; and Mr. Cox's boy always looked upon himself as being in the proudest position of the lot. Not even the lad who carried the easel and colour-box for Mr. Thomas Creswick, the great R.A., felt himself so elated and raised above his fellows, as did 'little John,' who with canvas on back and sketching stool in hand, trotted in the rear of David Cox, the veteran artist and kind-hearted man, who gave himself no airs of greatness, but went about humbly and unpretendingly, and had a good-natured word for everyone he met."

Life at Bettws was, with him, a stretch of continued industry. He was up early in the morning, sketching before breakfast, and returning to rouse his less active colleagues from their slumbers. He was always at work; in the intervals of serious sketching he was to be found

walking about, note-book in hand, studying effects, putting down bits, filling his folios with hundreds of scraps and memoranda. Then, as always, he was most accessible to fellow artists—helping them with advice, and being especially kind to young painters, for whom he would often improve their drawings by swift and skilful touches of his own; and this with an absence of all patronage and affectation of superiority, but with a modest self-depreciation which rendered his interference perfectly charming. When work was over, and his frugal evening meal was despatched—he lived simply, and was careless of what is called good feeding—Cox was the most kindly humorous of all the party at the “Royal Oak;” the foremost in generous appreciation of the work of others, the most willing to contribute for the general benefit the rich stores of his own experience. Of his later visits to Bettws, Mr. Hall gives an admirable sketch:—

“As long as he was able to take a journey so far from home—in fact, up to within the last three years of his life—David Cox rarely failed to pay an annual visit to his favourite Bettws. During his final visits he seldom went far from the ‘Oak’ to sketch, contenting himself with getting ‘bits,’ and making slight drawings in the vicinity of the inn. He might have been seen, almost every day, toddling in and out of the house, or with a small portfolio under his arm, accompanied by a friend or a regular attendant, jogging down to the old churchyard, to the riverside, or to ‘the big meadow’ (a large field of several acres, not far from the inn), in which he had often loved to paint, as it was little frequented, and which commanded fine views of the surrounding hills; and there he would sit for a few hours, making ‘outlines,’ colouring a ‘bit’ that pleased him, or perhaps watching for fine sky effects, which he would dash upon his ready canvas, with the facility of life-long practice. After working for a time in this manner, he would pack up his painting materials, put his sketch in the box, and toddle back to the ‘Oak,’ or to the old farm-house close by, where he latterly lodged, to his dinner in the middle of the day, for failing health and increasing weakness would not permit of his waiting, as of old, until the day’s work was ended, for his principal meal. The remainder of the day was spent in sauntering about at the porch of the inn, chatting with old friends, watching the beautiful Llugwy, as it glided gently along on the other side of the road, or smoking his cigar, seated at the open window of the pleasant little sitting-room. At length the time arrived when he could travel no longer; the favourite spot could be visited no more; but he would sit in his easy-chair by the fire-side of his house at Harborne, recalling its delightful scenes to memory, and dwelling on the pleasant incidents which gave them for him a peculiar charm.”

Thus, with little variety of habit, and with few incidents, the later years of David Cox’s life passed quietly away, abroad on the mountain, or the moor, or by the river-side, or on the broad sea sands, while the weather served; at work and in the society of friends—Roberts, Birch,

Radclyffe, Everitt, Hall, and others closely attached to him—when the autumn closed in, and the winter shades fell heavy on the year. One sad affliction happened to him a few years after he came to live at Harborne—the death of his wife, which occurred in 1845. For a time it seemed as if he would scarcely recover from the blow; but Art proved a consoler, and he worked on with much of his customary vigour. Somewhat later, he was himself shaken by a serious illness; but this also he threw off, and again returned to his easel. But his strength finally began to fail, and in 1855, when it was resolved by many of his friends and admirers to ask him to sit for his portrait, it was with some difficulty that he could take the journey to Edinburgh, to Sir John Watson Gordon, who had accepted the commission. He managed however, assisted by his son, and by his friend Mr. Hall, and the result was the noble portrait, admirable as a work of Art, faithful as a likeness of the man, which now hangs in the Birmingham Art Gallery, to which it passed after Cox's death. This portrait was presented to Cox in November 1855, at a pleasant gathering held in Mr. Birch's gallery at Metchley Abbey; but the great artist was too feeble in body and too much weakened in mind to do more than bow his thanks, and then to ask an attached friend—Mr. Charles W. Radclyffe—to take him home. He lived for a little more than three years longer, growing weaker, however, and able to pursue the practice of his art only at intervals, and even then without distinctly settled purpose and with diminished power. At last the end came. He was taken seriously ill, and felt that the close of his life was at hand. One evening early in June 1859, he rose from his accustomed chair by the fire-side, looked round his quiet sitting-room, slowly surveyed the works of Art hanging on the walls, and pausing at the door, he said plaintively, "Good-bye, pictures; I shall never see you again!" It was his farewell to them and to the world. On the 7th of June, early in the morning, at the ripe age of seventy-six, he peacefully departed; his last words, addressed to his son David were a faint "God bless you!" and then he expired without a sigh. He lies buried in the same grave with his wife, in Harborne churchyard, a modest stone marking their last resting-place, and a stained window in the church commemorating him in the place where he constantly worshipped.

J. THACKRAY BUNCE.

(To be continued.)

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

NOVEMBER 4.—“Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.”—
1 COR. X. 14.

THE “wherefore” in this verse carries us back to the previous verse, and reveals the train of thought that was passing through St. Paul’s mind as he wrote these words. He had been warning these Corinthian Christians in the eighth chapter against partaking of the sacrificial food that had been offered to idols,—and which was often exposed for sale afterwards in the public markets,—not because there was anything wrong in itself in eating such food, for an “idol is nothing in the world,” but because some of the “weaker brethren,” who believed in the existence and reality of the heathen divinities, might be led by the example of their stronger brethren to partake of such food, eating it “as a thing offered unto an idol,” and so defiling their conscience by participation in an idolatrous feast. This leads him in the ninth chapter to refer to his own example of self-denial in dealing with the weak, and he then passes on, in the tenth chapter, to justify his warnings by quoting the melancholy example of the fathers of the Jewish Church. They were placed in circumstances that in many respects were similar to those of the Church at Corinth, and in their temptations and sins the Corinthian Church might see the danger that threatened themselves. Still, the temptation was not irresistible, for God, who had permitted it, had not overtasked their strength, but “with the temptation” would “also make a way of escape, that they might be also able to bear it.” “Wherefore,” St. Paul adds, “my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry:” that is, do not see how near to it you may approach without being entangled and defiled, but avoid it altogether—“flee from it.”

It might seem that such a precept, however needed when St. Paul wrote, was utterly needless in the present day. For we have reached an intellectual position exactly the opposite to that occupied by the ancient world. They believed in “gods many, and lords many;” we find it difficult to believe in any God at all. They saw divinities every-

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition: these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

where in nature; we see God nowhere. Their sin was believing in gods who had no existence; our sin is disbelieving in One who alone "is self-existent and eternal;" and the last temptation, therefore, to which Christian nations, who acknowledge the existence of God, might seem to be exposed, is the sin of idolatry.

But if idolatry be the enthroning of anything in the place of God that is not God, this is a sin to which we are just as prone as the ancient world was to worship idols of gold and silver and stone. The Roman Catholic Church, for example, in spite of every protest to the contrary, is an idolatrous Church. And this not because it formally worships the Pope—although the extravagant homage rendered to the Pope by those who call him "our Lord God the Pope" comes perilously near to rendering him divine homage—but because it has dogmatically declared that the voice of a fallible man has, under certain conditions, the authority of the Word and Spirit of God over the intellect and conscience of man. No subtle sophistries, such as Cardinal Manning delights in when attempting to justify the dogma of Papal infallibility, can alter this fact. From henceforth, whenever the Pope speaks *ex cathedrâ*, it is the duty of every Roman Catholic not to ask, "What hath God spoken?" but what has the Pope said, and to accept his utterances as finally conclusive, on pain of eternal damnation. And this is idolatry in one of its worst and most perilous forms, for it is not only the substitution of the authority of man for the authority of God over the soul, but the idolatry itself is committed under the name and sanction of God Himself.

But Protestants, who reject with indignation the dogma of an infallible Pope, may themselves be in danger of a similar sin, though, it is true, in a much less dangerous form. Roman Catholics complain of us that we idolise the Bible very much as the Jews in the time of Christ idolised the Old Testament, and with the same result, that whilst we worship the letter with the profoundest reverence, we miss the spirit of the written Word; that, in short, we have substituted the doctrine of an infallible Book for their doctrine of an infallible Pope. The reproach, as it is levelled at us, is substantially untrue; but it must be confessed that Protestant theologians have not unfrequently given some cause for it. When, for example, human interpretations of the Bible have been placed on the same level of authority as the divine verities the Bible reveals; when theories of the Atonement have been confounded with the great fact of the Atonement, as declared by Christ and His Apostles; when a human creed has practically been asserted to be an infallible exposition of divine truth; or when the authority of the Bible has been used for purposes it was never intended to serve, and in support, not of religious truth, but of historical and political and

scientific theories, all of which have turned out to be false ; and when men have been branded as heretics or misbelievers because they have rightly refused to submit to the claim that theologians, in the name of the Bible, have thus made upon them ;—then we have been doing with our theories what Roman Catholics do with their Church, asserting for them an authority and an infallibility that belong to the Word and Spirit of the living God alone.

Just in the same way, though in an opposite sphere, scientific men and philosophers are in danger of idolising the intellect. To claim for the logical understanding sole authority in the discovery or the verifying of truth ; to declare that all truth knowable by man is reducible to successions of phenomena cognisable by the sense ; to deny that we can go beyond and behind all phenomena and hold converse with the unseen and spiritual Author of them all ; to refuse to allow the supreme facts of the spiritual nature of man any place, much less their own place, the highest, in the facts of human consciousness ; to do all this, in the name of rational thought, is an idolatry of the intellect not less offensive to God, and not less perilous to man, than the idolatry of Roman Catholics to their Church, or of Protestant theologians to their creeds.

Perhaps, however, the most dangerous form of idolatry is the practical idolatry of which men and women are in danger every day. Money is man's chiefest idol, longest worshipped, last destroyed, and it is, unhappily, only too possible to retain this one idol in the heart, even after we have professed to be servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. How many professing Christians there are who will be astonished to find themselves shut out from heaven, but whose sorrows will only be aggravated as they think of the inspired warning that all their life was lying open, but unheeded, before their eyes—"No covetous man who is an idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

To us all, in one form or other, the warning belongs—"Dearly beloved, flee from idolatry."

NOVEMBER 11.—"*To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him.*"—Daniel ix. 9.

It is far too often forgotten that we owe to the Bible all our belief in the possibility of the Divine forgiveness of sin. It is to the revelation of which the Bible is the authoritative record, and, above all, to the personal revelation of God in Christ, the world owes that most precious article in the creed of sinful humanity, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." But this is very generally overlooked or denied in the present day. It is assumed that it is quite possible to refuse to

believe there has been any supernatural revelation of God to man, and yet to retain all that is precious in the Christian doctrine of the love and mercy and fatherhood of God. These truths, it is said, rest on a basis of their own. As the knowledge of them does not depend upon revelation, their authority does not rest upon any revelation that is said to have been made from God to man. They are the primary and self-evident truths of natural religion, and they form the indissoluble basis of the future religion of humanity. When men have outgrown the superstitious reverence with which they now regard the Bible; when the "reign of Law" shall have made the supernatural synonymous with the impossible; when Christianity is freed from the additions and corruptions it owes to St. Paul, and the religion of Jesus in its heavenly purity once again emerges from its theological prison;—then men will rest in the sweet and simple and sufficient faith of a Father in heaven, whose children they are, and who is ever ready, in the fulness of His fatherly love to forgive and bless and save them all. Something like this are the words, or if not the words, the thoughts, of a great number of people in the present day, who have lost hold on the Evangelical religion of their early years, and yet have not reached, and have no wish to reach, the melancholy position either of those who say "there is no God," or, if there be a God, we cannot know Him. They have abandoned their former faith, so they say, because it was a house founded on the sand, and they have built for themselves a house that shall never fall, because it is founded upon the rock.

Now, all this sounds very pleasant and very fine, but when we come to ask these good people who reject the supernatural revelation of God to man, how they know that God will be so "ready to forgive," the answer is not very satisfactory. Certainly nature gives them but little ground for their faith. For, not to speak of the terrible conflict there is in the evidence nature affords of the character of God—a conflict that led John Stuart Mill to the conclusion that if the evidence of nature proved anything, it proved two Gods, one evil, the other good—the facts of our own nature seem to laugh at the very idea of forgiveness. For example, yonder is a man who has been a great drunkard, although he has now repented of his wickedness and folly. Does nature remit the penalties she exacts for his sin? Let his trembling hands, and enfeebled heart, and shattered nervous system answer. He has once sinned against nature, and she makes him pay for it to the "utmost farthing." So, again, there are hundreds of men living who have bitterly repented of the "wild oats" they sowed when young men, but their repentance does not cancel the awful physical results of their past life; these remain, in spite of their sorrow, and will go down with them to the

grave. Nature seems positively to discourage the belief that if there be a God He will forgive sins. In fact, the strongest resistance the Christian doctrine of the forgiveness of sins has to encounter in the present day is from the scientific doctrine of the uniformity of natural law. A distinguished writer said the other day that "to anyone believing in the reign of law the idea of forgiveness is simply absurd;" and it is difficult, on purely scientific grounds, to dispute the accuracy of the conclusion.

Nor is the case much better if we turn from physical nature to society, and, from the dealings of men with each other in their social relations, endeavour to discover whether God will forgive sin. Why, society forgives absolutely nothing. It enacts and exacts an inexorable punishment for every offence committed against it. There are many sins, it is true, which it never punishes, but it is simply because it does not recognise them as sins: once really transgress its laws, and it will "deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou shalt be cast into prison." Not only so, when you come out of prison, and have expiated your crime by years, it may be, of penal servitude, society will still refuse to forgive you. You have sinned against it, and it casts you into "its outer darkness" for ever. It never forgives and never forgets.

But if neither nature nor society gives us any warrant for the hope that God will pardon sin, what do we find if we look within our own hearts? Does our own forgiveness of our enemies warrant the hope that God will forgive us as we have forgiven them? Forgiven them! Is there one man in a thousand who forgives his enemies? Excluding the authority of Revelation and the motives it creates—and these are necessarily excluded upon the hypothesis on which we are reasoning—is it not a fact that to man the forgiveness of his enemies is the most unnatural thing in the world? If it be accomplished—and it is very doubtful whether it ever really takes place out of the circle of Christian motives and Christian life—it is only with a supreme moral effort that plainly enough declares its opposition to the instincts of human nature. And how can an act that is seldom done at all, or one that is only accomplished after great effort of the will, justify the conclusion that God, of whose character we are supposed to be totally uncertain, is eager and ready to forgive us our offences against Him?

The truth is, the fact of the forgiveness of sins is the revelation of Christianity to the world, and Christianity has made it the familiar truth it now seems to the human heart. If "natural" religion seems to possess this truth equally with Christianity, she has first stolen it from the Christian treasury, and then claimed it as her own; or, as Davison says, she "has kindled her faded taper at Gospel light."

However natural such truths as the Fatherhood of God, His gracious readiness to receive the weakest and most unworthy of His creatures if they seek Him, or His infinite mercy, pardoning iniquity, and transgression, and sin, may now seem to the religious instincts of the heart, yet the heart by itself would never have discovered them. We owe them to revelation, and to revelation alone.

NOVEMBER 18.—“*Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.*”—2 Cor. ix. 7.

How long the community of goods lasted among the early Church at Jerusalem, as described in Acts ii. 44, we have no means of knowing; but the fact that the Apostle Paul was compelled by the poverty of the Jewish Christians to appeal to Gentile Churches for help—and it is to this appeal the text refers—seems to indicate that a complete equalisation of property did not, as in the nature of things it could not, last very long. Anyhow, it is to the contribution the Corinthian Church was making for their poor brethren at Jerusalem that we are indebted for our “Golden Text,” a text which contains, in a single sentence, the law of Christian giving for every age.

Perhaps we shall best understand the law if we see, first of all, what kind of giving and of givers it condemns.

It is worth while, however, to notice that this text says nothing about those—always a too numerous class in every Church—who never give anything at all to the cause of God. Other texts, and some of them among the most terrible and severe in the New Testament, refer to them in terms of unmistakable warning and judgment. If a man who loves his money better than he loves his God, and who all through his life has steadily refused to give away anything more than he was absolutely compelled, should find himself at last shut out of heaven, and branded with the idolater's curse, he will at least have no reason to complain that the New Testament did not faithfully and fully warn him of his sin and his danger before the punishment came.

But the text refers to a different class from those who are “covetous men,” and therefore “idolaters;” it has in view not men who refuse altogether to give in response to the needs of others, but those who give, and yet give in a way that is displeasing to God.

And there are two of these evil modes of giving which the text condemns, and which are as common in the Churches of England as they seem to have been in the Church at Corinth.

First, there is the “grudging” giver, or as the Greek word literally means, the man who gives with “sorrow,” or “regret” that he has to

give at all. This is a very common type in our Churches. Sometimes, indeed, he does not care to let anyone see the wrench it is for him to part with his money when he is asked for a subscription ; but more often you may judge what a painful operation it is from watching the expression of his countenance as he hands you his guinea. He has been expecting your call for some time past, and now you have come, he takes care to make you feel as uncomfortable as possible as you tell him the object of your visit. If you had been a commercial traveller tempting him to buy remarkably cheap wine, or a picture-dealer with some great bargains in engravings, he would probably have had a pleasant chat with you, even if he had bought nothing ; but since you have only come to beg for Christ, he sees no reason whatever for showing you the slightest courtesy. Probably he will say something of people "always coming for money," or of his "many claims," or of "other people not doing their duty," but whether or not, his look will speak loudly enough. It will be as cloudy and dark as a dull December day. He gives, it is true, but there is no cheerfulness in the gift, no sunny brightness of look that makes the collector feel the pleasure it is even to ask such a man for help ; there is too clearly the "sorrow" that tells you he is suffering a personal bereavement in parting with his money.

Then there is another kind of giver whom St. Paul equally condemns, the man who gives because he is obliged to give, "from necessity." And there are many kinds of "necessity" or "compulsion" that compel a man to give, almost in spite of himself. One of these is conscience, to which we have just referred, and it is a blessed thing that it is so, for were it not that a sense of duty compelled some men to give, their hearts certainly would never do so. So their consciences have to do the work of their hearts, and to whip them to generosity, when God would have them so far in advance of their conscience as to be out of reach of its whip altogether.

Then there is the compulsion that the gifts of others exert, and a most powerful compulsion this oftentimes is. Subscription lists are really means of grace to some people, for nothing on earth would induce them to part with their money, except the dislike of seeing Mr. So and So's name on the published list of donations, whilst their own is left out. Even the amount of their gifts is determined by the same standard. They give not as "God has prospered them," not as "they purpose in their heart," not as the claims of the charity seeking aid seem to demand—these are all considerations far too small for their notice ;—but they give what Mr. So and So has given. They make as respectable an appearance before man as he does, and they see no reason why they should not be equally respectable before God. So they give, but the secret of their gift is the "necessity" of appearing not less generous or

not less rich than their neighbour, not the love of their heart to God.

Custom is another of the sources of these gifts of "necessity." They have been in the habit of subscribing for many years past, perhaps their father and grandfather did so before them, and they give now simply from habit. There is as much, or as little, *morality* in their giving as in the character of their hand-writing. Both have been fixed by habit, and both are equally mechanical. We see the force of this mere habit of giving in the very curious fact that so large a proportion of Christians find one guinea the exact amount of their pecuniary obligation in subscribing to any religious society. This one guinea has been called "the great impostor," and certainly if the gifts of Christian men to the cause of Christ are to be measured by their ability to give, rather than by what they have been in the habit of giving, it is hard to say that it does not deserve the name.

Now in contrast to both these evil methods of giving stands the "cheerful giver." He does not necessarily give more than either of his ill-favoured brethren, but he gives it in a different way. He makes collectors feel that he is under a positive obligation to them for taking the trouble to call and ask him for a subscription. The moment you look at him you see that he is one whom the Master has taught "it is more blessed to give than to receive." He parts with his money, not with a sigh, but with a song of praise in his heart to God who enables him to give. He has a strange power of making the covetous or the niggardly half ashamed of themselves whenever he comes near them. He is often one of the causes, and a righteous cause, of the "necessity" which compels some men to give. And even the "sorrowful" giver dares not show his regret if his cheerful friend happens to be near.

Nor is the explanation of such a man's cheerfulness in giving far to seek. His heart is in his gift; it has come from his heart before it came from his pocket, and that explains everything. And his heart and conscience and his pocket, instead of being irreconcilable foes—as they are too often—are sworn friends, and so, when he gives, the conscience smiles its approving smile, and the heart glows with happiness, until the gladness reaches his face, and it shines with the pleasant light of the "cheerful" giver.

And God "loves" such a man. He loves him for the highest reason possible to God, that just as the poor broken piece of glass reflects the glory of the sun, so he reflects the boundless charity of Him who "giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not." In such a gift God sees Himself.

NOVEMBER 25.—“*God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*”—John iv. 24.

The first clause of this verse would possibly be better rendered by leaving out the indefinite article and reading it, “God is Spirit,” for we should thus emphasise more forcibly the fact which our Lord is declaring, that the very essence of the Divine Being, His innermost nature, is spiritual. Now this was not a new truth first revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ. He doubtless made it new, in the living reality that, under His teaching, it assumed for men’s hearts and consciences; but He did not reveal it.

The primary and fundamental truth of all religion, the unity and the spirituality of God, was already familiar to the Jewish people; and that it was familiar to them, is the highest possible evidence that they had received a supernatural revelation from God. For however it may be the fashion in the present day, and among a certain school of writers, to speak disparagingly of the ancient Jewish faith and of its influence on the Jewish nation, it remains, nevertheless, one of the great facts in the history of the human race, that they, and they alone, reached the highest and most spiritual conception of God known to the world before the coming of Christ. In fact, so spiritual was the idea of the Being and Nature of God as contained in the Jewish Scriptures, that even the Gospel has found in it nothing to criticise or condemn. The God of the New Testament, in all His fundamental attributes, is the God of the Old Testament as well.

If it be said that, notwithstanding this high and spiritual idea of God, the Jews were constantly relapsing into idolatry, this only adds to the wonder that a nation, inveterately prone to idolatrous worship, should ever have reached such an elevation in their thought of God, and makes the need of a Divine revelation to explain it more urgent than ever. The truth is, that without the miracle of the revelation of Sinai, the Jewish people is a hopelessly insoluble mystery in the history of the world. We may attempt to get rid of the supernatural from Exodus, but it is not possible to expel it from the nation, the story of whose birth is told in Exodus. If no miracle was wrought at Sinai, the Hebrew race remains the standing miracle among the nations of the world.

But though the unity and spirituality of God was not a new truth in the teaching of our Lord, what was new were the profound spiritual consequences Christ deduced from it. To us it seems a very trite and commonplace thing to say that because “God is Spirit,” and His worship therefore spiritual, worship need not be confined, and cannot be confined, to any one sacred locality; but when Christ said that to the Samaritan woman, He was uttering an absolutely new truth to man. It

was a truth simply incalculable in its results. It is not too much to say that even if the Roman conquest and destruction of Jerusalem had not destroyed the Jewish Temple and the Jewish worship, these words of Christ would have been sufficient to do the work. They pronounced the doom, not only of an exclusive religion, but of all exclusive worship of God. They make temple, and priest, and ritual, for ever impossible to the spiritual man, and are the charter of the spiritual freedom of worship he claims in Christ Jesus. They condemn, without a solitary word of pity, the most gorgeous and elaborate ritual of worship, where the spirit and the life of worship are absent, and they justify, as acceptable to the Most High God, the rudest and the humblest services, if only it be offered "in spirit and in truth."

How completely alien this new truth concerning the spirituality of the worship of God was from all that man *naturally* conceives of that worship, may be seen from a single fact—as significant as it is sad—that although eighteen centuries have passed by since the Lord Jesus uttered these words, the vast majority of His professed disciples have not yet succeeded in learning the lesson they teach. Christendom still believes in sacred persons, and sacred places, and sacred things, and has still its Jerusalem or its Gerizim, where alone acceptable worship can be offered to the Most High. The sacerdotal Churches of the Christian Faith have completely reversed these divine words of Christ, and instead of determining the reality of the worship of God by the double test Christ Himself gives, its being offered "in spirit and in truth," whether with or without external ritual, have made the ritual the supreme test, and the "spirit and the truth" subordinate accompaniments.

But while we condemn the mechanical idea of worship that obtains in the Greek and Roman Churches and their illegitimate brethren amongst ourselves, and whilst we rejoice in the higher and more spiritual idea that obtains among the free Evangelical Churches of our own land, let us be careful lest it be only an idea. The tendency to lose the spirit in the form, and to allow the most spiritual acts of the soul to sink into mere ritualistic performances, is not confined to Churches that believe in "priests" and use a "Book of Common Prayer." It is inherent in human nature itself, and is the true reason for the suspicion with which Nonconformists regard any very marked ritual in the public worship of God, even when offered by spiritual men. The ritual of devotion, in spite of every protest, is continually in danger of degenerating into the devotion of ritual, and the greater the amount of ritual, the greater the corresponding danger. Even in our simple and informal worship the danger is constantly present. The free prayers of our ministers on the Sunday, the service of song in the House of the Lord, the reading of the Scriptures, the prayer-meeting in the

week—all these may become just as mechanical and as meaningless as the chatter of the poor Irish peasant as he gabbles over his Paternosters and touches his beads before the altar. If the presence of ritual is no security for the presence of "spirit and of truth" in the worship of Almighty God, the absence of ritual is no assurance of the absence of form. The singing of "Rock of Ages" may be as offensively unreal to God as the repeating an "Ave Maria."

On those who have the religious training of children, this imposes a grave responsibility. Children, even more than adults, are apt to fall into mere lip-worship of God, and in many cases, through no fault of their own, a lip-worship is all that is possible to them. When, for example, hymns are given to them to sing that express some of the ripest and richest experiences of the Divine life, experiences which no child could possibly have ever reached; when little ones, whose home ought to be their heaven, and whose heaven is largely made up of play, are made to say that that they "long to be an angel, and with the angels stand;" or little hearts that have never known a trouble of ten minutes' duration, and whose tears are like April showers, are taught to sing—

"I lay my griefs on Jesus,
My burdens and my cares;
He from them all releases,
He all my sorrows shares;"

or when the piety they are expected to "show at home" is not the piety Christ delights to see in a child, of unselfishness, and gentleness, and obedience, and love, but the piety their parents have manufactured for them, of long prayers, and learning chapters in the Bible, and sitting still while they listen to sermons that sometimes send their parents to sleep, and then giving an account of them when they reach home; when no provision is made in the services of the Sanctuary for that most gracious and blessed of all boons to children, "Children's services," short, bright, interesting from beginning to end; and when, in consequence, the scholars of the Sunday-school are brought in, Sunday after Sunday, to service in the church, and to be a misery to themselves and to everyone about them; when all this is the case, we are doing our very best to make it impossible for our children to worship God "in spirit and in truth."



THE AUTUMNAL MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION.

LEICESTER, than which no better selection could be made, has twice had the honour of entertaining the Union—first in 1848, and now again in 1877. Its position, easy of access from London and the South, and yet contiguous to the great strongholds of Congregationalism in the North and the Midlands, suffices to ensure a large gathering, whilst its historical associations and its connection with some of the classical names of modern English Nonconformity—Robert Hall, Edward Miall, Dr. Legge—create an atmosphere highly favourable to the action of those subtle stimulating forces which these meetings always bring into play, and which, by the healthy quickening they impart to men often in sore need of quickening, are as important a factor of our autumnal gatherings as the more tangible mental pabulum our caterers so kindly and abundantly provide for us. We had ample evidence during the meetings that the Nonconformists of Leicester are no feeble folk, everything that we saw betokening the presence of a robust, aggressive life in their Churches. How they must have worked to organise and execute the admirable plans for the entertainment of the crowds who thronged to the meetings, is a wonder unto many. Of one thing we are sure, none who were present will withhold their meed of praise for the excellence of their arrangements and the princely scale of their hospitality. As in former years, Episcopalians, Wesleyans, Baptists, all became our entertainers. And this is one of the pleasantest features of the Union meetings, showing as it does that brethren may dwell together in unity even while the one brother, in his public capacity, is engaged in giving the most incisive testimony to his belief of what the other brother denies with all his heart and soul.

If for nothing else, the Leicester meetings will be memorable for the liberties that were taken with "the traditions of the fathers." For the first time in its history a layman has occupied the chair of the Union; for the first time in its history it has sought its preacher from the ranks of a sister community. The selection of Dr. Maclaren as the preacher was particularly happy. No more capable man could have been found in either denomination, and no man who more happily blends an enthusiastic loyalty to his own communion with that catholicity of thought which makes him a common possession and his name a household word in all communions. We are not among those who sigh for the obliteration of denominational landmarks—a thing that on this side the millennium, at any rate, could only be accomplished by a fatal constraining of Christian liberty, and consequent waste of the manifold wealth of

the Christian life ; and therefore we do not hail this act of the committee as a harbinger of the speedy coalescence of the two sister denominations, but we do hail it as a far-seeing and brotherly act. So long as the principles we are each set to guard are unmolested, the closest fellowship among Christian bodies is a gain unspeakable to the world no less than to the Church, for it helps to remove a not unreasonable objection to Christianity, and at the same time counteracts the tendency in the Church to narrow its thoughts, and perhaps its sympathies also, when subjected to too heavy a pressure from its denominational boundaries. The sermon which Dr. Maclaren preached was worthy of his great reputation—clear and bold in its outlines, penetrated through and through with his own intense and vehement nature, at one time keen and incisive, at another thrilling, with tender pathos, and, better than all, it struck the very notes to which every heart in his great audience was most ready to respond. Nothing could be more timely, as Dr. Raleigh said on Thursday morning, than the great appeal to cleave unto Christ, which was the burden of the whole sermon. Few who were there will ever forget the searching tenderness with which that appeal was sent right home to our hearts in the closing words of the sermon, and few could have left the chapel without thoughts of deeper claims from, and a more loving loyalty to, our great King.

Mr. Richard's address was in every way remarkable. It is not necessary to refer here to the admirable qualities of style which characterise all his public utterances. The address was a great and wise sermon to preachers upon sins which are very apt to slip their notice. Engaged as they are so much more with individuals and the sins of individuals, the sins of communities do not catch their eye, or move their heart, or excite their practical resistance to the same degree. Mr. Richard most appropriately individualised those sins for us, and set them before us in their concrete enormity with a vivid realism which almost reminded one of the touch of Dante. At the same time we must express our own regret that Mr. Richard devoted so large a space to the advocacy of the views of peace, with which his name is so honourably identified. He did injustice to this, a very grand subject, by giving such prominence to one aspect of it. We venture to add he did injustice to himself and the Union by using his chairmanship for such a purpose. We feel bound to speak, for it would be very unfortunate if his example should be followed. We admire his ability, we honour his loyalty, but we cannot commend his judgment.

To very many the most helpful thing they have met with for many a day was the masterly paper of Professor Fairbairn on the anti-Christian teaching of this time. We dare venture to say that no finer contribution to this absorbing discussion has yet appeared, and victory in the struggle,

when it comes, will be the reward of those who follow the great lines which he laid down with so firm a hand.

It came out during these meetings, in more ways than one, that a very few of our ministers are inclined to look with less hostility upon certain speculative non-Christian tendencies than has ever been our habit hitherto. Without in the least challenging the earnestness of these brethren or their loyalty to Christ, there can be no doubt that their views, which they took great pains to bring into prominence at these meetings, created a deep and painful impression. If there has been any faltering of opinion on the great essential truths of religion—which can be said at most of very few individuals—the way to meet the evil is not by maintaining a timid silence, or resorting to acts of still more timid violence and repression. We must, as Principal Fairbairn said so admirably, meet errors of reason by drawing from reason the corresponding truths. In short, our weapons must be rational, constructive, religious, and ethical, to use his phraseology. The very shock which these views excited attested how profoundly our Congregational ministry is attached to the great verities of the Christian faith. It was to an audience practically unanimous, and which responded with electric sympathy to the white heat of the speaker, that Mr. Fairbairn spoke; his paper, besides all the courage and confidence which it awoke, left us with a feeling that one of the men to meet these times, which Mr. Fairbairn urged us to make, had already appeared, and that the committee of Airedale College had succeeded in obtaining a Principal capable, if his life be spared, of rendering a great service, not only to his own college and Congregationalism, but to the entire Christian Church.

This year, as last, the great absorbing interest of the meetings centred in the Finance Scheme. As a matter of fact, the scheme is probably more compact and workable to-day for the severity and even the hostility with which it has been discussed. The feature which was least liked by many who cordially accepted its main provisions, was its tendency—perhaps more in appearance, however, than in reality—to draw too much the details of management into the hands of the Central Council and its Committee. An organisation of such dimensions is sure to get into difficulties if it aspire to rival the versatility of power which can equally rend an oak or pick up a pin. The picking up of pins will be in danger of becoming the chief burden of its thoughts. It was felt by many who were warm friends of the scheme as a whole, that to review the grants as was proposed, with any thoroughness, would throw an amount of routine labour upon the Council which it could never overtake, or, if it overtook, would leave it with neither time nor energy for weightier matters. This, together with the appear-

ance of over-centralisation which this particular proposal suggested, was the chief cause of the strong opposition which the scheme met with in some of the Northern Associations, and notably in Lancashire and Yorkshire, where the minorities against it were large, and in Cheshire, where it was actually rejected.

It would be difficult to overrate the service which Mr. Hannay rendered to the denomination by the admirable temper and skill with which he met this fire of adverse criticism. All through the winter, at cost of endless labour, he conferred with brethren and associations in every part of the country, and by his unflinching good-humour and unflinching courage in meeting all attacks, did much to bring the scheme safely through the shoals which at one time threatened to wreck it. Nothing could have been more judicious than the measure adopted by the Committee of the Congregational Union with the view to unite all moderate men on some common ground. Those who had watched public feeling among us for the past few years, knew well how swiftly the opinion had grown up that some national united scheme alone was strong enough to meet the necessities of rural Congregationalism ; it was also evident that on the main principles of the scheme we were nearly all agreed, and that the bulk of the opposition was based upon points of detail, which could be amended without molesting any principle. Considering all this, the Committee wisely determined to deal frankly with the opposition, and to call to their councils a fair representation of the most pronounced opponents of the scheme without being absolutely irreconcilables, in order to see what modifications could be devised that might lead to a reconciliation of all conflicting thoughts and a hearty union in the great work which all equally have at heart. The Committee was accordingly enlarged in this way, and the result of its deliberations afterwards was in substance the amended scheme brought forward at Leicester. That scheme differs from its predecessor mainly in this one point, that whereas the latter proposed that the Council should revise the whole of the grants made by the Associations each year, the former makes the Council vote its funds in lump sums to the Associations according to a budget furnished by each Association at the beginning of the year, and leaves the distribution of these sums entirely in their hands, except that the Council has the power in certain cases to object to or even revise a grant after due notice. This simple alteration secures that the details of management shall be left to the association, and yet the Council shall possess entire control over its funds, and be able, if need be, to call in question any grant that does not consist with the objects of the confederation.

The scheme as thus amended, and with one or two suggestions for

improvements in details for the consideration of the Committee, was carried with a heartiness and unanimity that was simply astonishing after the year of battles that had just closed. Mr. Arnold, of Northampton, who had been a vigorous opponent last year, was the first to accept, and to accept most cordially, the scheme as it stands now. His seemed to be a typical case, for not one discordant voice was raised when the vote was taken on the second day after full and fair discussion; the enthusiasm rose to a pitch rarely or never seen before, the whole assembly rising up as one man by a common impulse and uttering a common joy, spontaneously breaking forth into the song of the Doxology. The speech of Mr. Hannay, in introducing the discussion was in every sense of the word a masterpiece. It showed in every sentence not only the force and fire of the great orator, but oratory made subservient to the wisdom of the statesman and the zeal of the Christian. It lifted the whole subject clean out of the arena of party strife and religious politics, and set it in that serener atmosphere where the great motive forces of the world to come have play, and where men feel that they tread on holy ground. Not a heart among us but responded to the impassioned appeals to love and zeal, and the fear of God and personal service and devotion, which ran through and through the whole speech, and imparted a solemnity and significance most impressive to the act by which the great measure was finally adopted.

Now that the scheme is fairly launched, and in a year or so will probably be in full operation, it is worth considering what can be done to ensure its success. So far as the machinery is concerned, it is probably as near perfection as can be attained without actual experience. Is it possible to ensure for this fine instrument adequate results in multiplied energy and solid work? One's mind reverts insensibly to the old truth—"Paul plants and Apollos waters, but God gives the increase." Well, be it so; we rejoice in the fact, and yet none the less we know that the spiritual harvest in the long run and over all the field, depends on the energy and skill of Paul and Apollos, just as much as our crops depend in the long run on the energy and skill of our farmers. It is quite true that the force we seek to wield is a spiritual force, and only yields so far to material conditions, but for all that there is no breach of the great law of causation in the application of that force. Cause and effect are as intimately bound together in the spiritual realm as in the material. We reason, therefore, that if we do our parts and take advantage of the laws of the spiritual universe with the same skill as our great engineers have taken advantage of the laws of nature, God will bless us with a commensurate success.

Perhaps the chief danger at the outset is lest our Country Unions should imagine that a sort of millennium has come, and that God's

work will be done henceforth by the scheme, and not by the sweat of men's brows, as heretofore. It is a leading doctrine of mechanics that machinery does not originate energy, but only distributes it with greater advantage. We shall all do well to keep that doctrine in our thoughts when we begin to work our new society. It is not meant to be a substitute for individual and local exertion, but a call to greater exertion, larger liberality, more earnest prayer, a holier consecration, a purer service, on the part of every member of every Church and Association in England. If the scheme bring a great opportunity, as we firmly believe it does, it also brings a great responsibility. May the Divine Spirit make us equal both to the one and to the other ! Our Home Missions have languished heretofore mainly on account of the apathy of the Churches, and the Churches have been apathetic mainly because their ministers have not taken the trouble to lay the facts before them. If you make out a case, our Churches are never slow to respond. It will do much to ensure success in the working of the new society if we make its inauguration an opportunity for deepening the interest of the Churches in its work. Then, again, success will largely depend on the *personnel* of the proposed Council, for it is not the distribution of money that constitutes the chief function of such an organisation, but the bringing of the force of character and the zeal and the ideas of the men who preside over it into contact with weak Associations and Churches. All care should be taken, therefore, by each Association that its representatives shall be, not the richest, but the best and strongest men it can select. Of still greater importance is a right solution of the many practical problems that meet us in dealing with rural Congregationalism. There is the supply of ministers for small Churches, their support, the economical distribution of resources ; there are evils like the useless competition of too many small Nonconformist Churches in the same town, the waste of energy involved in small Churches having each their separate minister, the use of such Churches as loopholes for the admission of incompetent men to our ministry. The right settlement of such questions as these would have a prodigious effect on the development of our rural Church life. Have our Associations fairly faced these questions and thought out clear ideas upon them, and a definite policy with a view to their settlement ? Would it not help to smooth the way and to ensure success in the working of the new organisation if we grappled with these questions now in the interval of transition from the old system to the new ? In such ways as these, then, let us seek to awaken an interest, and a prudence, and a spirit of zeal and prayerfulness in every Church and in every Association worthy of this great and wise measure of Christian statesmanship. It is a noble work, and for that very reason it will try us as by fire, and show what worth there is in

us. If we begin our new departure with a deepened sense of individual responsibility and a heightened zeal, we shall enter a new and more glorious epoch in the history of English Congregationalism ; but if we lean upon the "scheme" and not upon God and upon ourselves, we shall be doomed to inevitable failure ; and the scheme, instead of saving us, will only weigh us in the balance and prove us wanting.



CONSCIENCE, CULT, AND THE CONFESSIONAL.

CONSCIENCE and cult are two words of opposite, or rather of complementary, meaning to each other ; they are often used and yet not accurately distinguished. I propose to make a few remarks on each, and to point out how the use of the one inevitably calls for the recognition of the other. For the former term, conscience, we have no need to offer a word of explanation. It has long since received letters of naturalisation among us. It is as old at least as the English version of the Bible, and probably a good deal older. But cult is still regarded as a barbarism, or at least a Gallicism. I met a well-educated man the other day who was almost ignorant of its true meaning, and who complained of its use in such a sentence as this, that "the State may have some right to regulate questions of cult, never to interfere in a case of conscience." I had to point out to my fastidious friend that no other expression so exactly marked the boundary-line between the right and wrong interference of the secular power with spiritual affairs. I am not going to discuss that question here, but I must insist that without some such distinction as this to help us we are not able to enter on the discussion at all. We should be as helpless as a mathematician without algebraical symbols. I do not say that all disputes are merely verbal, but they certainly turn in most cases on the accurate meaning of certain technical terms, and if we will only begin with accurately determining the sense of these, much idle logomachy may be avoided.

With regard to the objection of purists against the introduction of new words such as "cult" into the language, I have only to say in reply, that whether we like it or not, the importation of foreign phrases and new-fangled expressions must and will go on. Dictionary English is, as we all know, a very different capital from the scanty stock of words used by a ploughman or a carter. It has been calculated that from 500 to 1,000 words will carry a day labourer through his life from his home to the workshop and back. This is his scanty stock-in-trade of words, and enough for all his modest wants, and yet, as Max Müller reminds us, the English dictionary in Sharon Turner's day

contained no less than 38,000 words, of which 23,000 were Saxon, and 15,000 were traced to a classical source. A few years later M. Thimmerel took an accurate inventory of the words in Richardson's and Webster's dictionaries, and established that there were 43,566 words, of which 29,853 came from classical, 13,230 from Teutonic, the rest from miscellaneous sources. But the later editions of Webster have brought up our list of words to the prodigious sum of 80,000, and if to the increasing list of new scientific and technical terms we were to add on their adjectival adverbial forms, it would be easy to swell up the list to upwards of 100,000. It is idle, then, to complain of this foreign invasion. The cry is still they come, and since we cannot exclude them, the utmost we can do is to keep them in quarantine for some time and then admit them only as aliens until they have acquired the right of naturalisation and full equality with words of home growth.

The expression "cult," which we here propose to discuss, is a case of a word in a state of transition. It has passed through quarantine, but is not yet naturalised. It has found its place in our dictionaries, but it is not as yet a word of newspaper English. It still has an uncouth sound when used on a platform or in the pulpit, and we could readily dispense with it if we could find an English equivalent for it; but, as a matter of fact, its adoption is a necessity if we would accurately distinguish the two sides of religion, the external and the internal from each other. Certain terms are correlative, we cannot understand the one without the other, and this is why, having something to say on the subject of conscience, I find it necessary to point out that "cult" and "conscience" are complementary terms,—the use of the one invariably suggests the other.

Everyone knows that in France there is a Ministry of Worship and Public Instruction, and that what we term worship is in French *culte publique*. It is equally familiar to the English reader that in Germany the dispute between the Pope and the Kaiser as to the question of supremacy in the direction of religious affairs is termed the *Cultur-kampf*. It is the same battle essentially as that which has been fought out in this country over the Public Worship Bill, and the same parties, allowing of course for the differences between Germany and England on the one hand, and the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches on the other, take sides on the question there as here. Cult is, then, the external part of religion, its ritual or ceremonial, and it is important or not in our eyes in an inverse proportion with our perception of the spiritual nature of Christ's religion. It is a question, indeed, whether Christianity, rightly understood, has any ritual at all; certainly none of Divine appointment, a ritual such as that which Moses drew up under Divine direction, "for see," said he, "that thou make all things accord-

ing to the pattern showed thee on the Mount." As for the ritual or external element in a purely spiritual religion, it is, if not abolished, at least reduced to a minimum. According to St. James, the Threskeia, or external element, of religion, is "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." As for ceremonial as such, this Apostle of earnestness adds this caution, "If any man seem to be religious (*i.e.* scrupulous about the ceremonials of religion) and bridleth not his tongue, this man's religion is vain." Evidently, then, questions of cult or ritual which exercise the soul of this art-living, pleasure-seeking age of ours, had no place in the thoughts of these early Christians. Their worship was conducted with such a stern simplicity, without temples, or priests, or altars, or sacrifice, that they came to be considered as a sect of atheists by those who had no other ideas of religion than those of dress and decoration. We may judge how hard-pressed the ritual party are to find support for their practices in the New Testament, when the cloak which the Apostle left at Troas is pressed into the service and understood to mean some cape or dalmatic with an ecclesiastical cut and some symbolic meaning. To such straits are men driven by the significant silence of the New Testament on all these questions of cult and points of man millinery, on which the younger school of Ritualists delight to enlarge.

Cult and conscience, then, are the two sides of religion, the body and soul, as we should say, of that which, regarded manwards, consists of a system of ordinances, and, Godwards, consists of that living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service. Between cult and conscience so considered there can be no contrast, but rather the most inner harmony and agreement. We may take this, indeed, as a simple test of the truth of our religion when the outward cult and the inward conscience develops harmoniously and in due proportion. As Shakespeare observes—

"For nature crescent doth not grow alone
In thews and bulk."

So it is when our religion is real and true. The internal and the external then harmonise, our worship is natural and hearty, because our lives, not our lips only, are vocal with His praise, and the outward service is not burdened with ceremonies, or limited to certain persons or places, because every spot is hallowed ground, and all who are redeemed are kings and priests unto God. On the other hand, we invariably find under false systems of religion that when the cult is too much externalised, the conscience is also misled and depraved. Such is the connection between cult and conscience that we cannot overload the one with trifles without burdening the other in the same way and to

the same extent. It was so under Judaism, and must be so in the forms of Christianity which are only survivals of Judaism. The ritual of the Old Testament was burdened with ceremonies fatiguing in their minuteness, and for this reason, it is added, "they could not purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God." The conscience could never rise above the level of the cult, and as the one was oppressed with a false externalism, so the other was equally external. It is precisely the same with Ritualism and Romanism, which are the fashionable follies of our day. Given a certain amount of religious interest, then the frivolous and self-indulgent classes will invariably find out a religion adapted to their taste. It will have a cult, in which the æsthetic and symbolic element shall prevail, and its discipline of conscience will be one in which the direction is in the hands of a priest, and its restrictions chiefly directed against the grosser forms of evil.

We have only to glance at the confessional and its abuses to understand what a sickly thing the conscience may become when the cult is externalised. Instead of the worshipper being once purged and having no more conscience of sin, there springs up a nauseous and nauseating system of self-inspection and self-discovery. The wise oracle of the ancients advised that Camarina, a marsh exhaling foul and pestilential odours, should be left alone. The expression is proverbial, and points to the lesson that there are some nuisances which are only intensified by the attempts which we make to abate them. It sounds plausible to say that we can only feel real contrition for sin after self-examination, and since we are all disposed to deal only too indulgently with ourselves, we should call in the help of a ghostly counsellor to direct us in this act of self-discovery. But experience points the other way. The verdict of a healthy conscience is that the thought of sin, and even the remembrance of past sin, is to be put away as far as possible. The dead should bury their dead, the past is to be consigned to a solemn oblivion. God is said not only to forgive, but even to forget the sins of those who repent and turn to Him. This truth of the Divine forgetfulness, still more gracious even than the Divine forgiveness, is intended to produce a corresponding feeling in us. The expression, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more," carries with it much more than the bare injunction not to repeat the same act of sin. It pledges us to turn away from all occasions of evil, to govern our thoughts as well as our acts, and to realise what it is to be risen with Christ and to seek those things which are above.

We conclude, then, that a ceremonial religion and a sickly state of conscience generally go together. It is a law of our nature, that as there is a correspondence between body and mind, so that they are not

twain but only two sides of the one being, so it is with religion. Cult is its body, conscience its soul, and a diseased state of the one depraves the other, while, conversely, a healthy cult and a sound conscience are inseparable. It is the *mens sana in corpore sano*. For this reason we have been struck with the shallowness of much of the censure pronounced by the press on the recent revelations concerning the abuses of the confessional among the Ritualists. Even the comic press has taken up the subject, and represents Britannia handing over a sneaking priest to be kicked out of doors by a sturdy paterfamilias of the John Bull type. Now all this is mere blank cartridge, it is like the "No Popery" sound and fury of the Papal Aggression times, and, like it, signifies nothing. The roots of the evil lie down deeper than mere resentment at the invasion of the sanctity of home life. If we would reach the evil at its source, we must remember the inseparable connection between cult and conscience. A sensualised idolatrous type of worship, in which a priest at the altar works a magical change in the elements, must result in such a debasement of conscience that it is ready to lay itself bare at the feet of such a wonder-worker as this. In the Romish system all is consistent and of a piece, and we have no right to connive at one half of the Ritualistic programme and then express horror at the other half, which is its logical outcome, its inevitable consequent. The sacramental doctrine of the Real Presence and the sacramental doctrine of Confession (for both alike are sacraments, and part of the mystic seven in the scholastic system) thus stand and fall together. If it is a sign of health not to know that we have a constitution, the same may be said of conscience. A very conscientious man, as Archbishop Whately once shrewdly remarked, is one who will often do a very unconscientious thing. Scrupulosity about mint, anise, and cummin, is often found combined with indifference to the weightier matters of the law. For this reason, the more we simplify the cult, the more we shall purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Thus the connection between these two factors of our nature is so close that they rise and fall together. Morality and religion are in reality only the two sides of the same thing. Where the cult is scriptural and the conscience enlightened, there the work of grace is begun, and our hearts, and even our bodies, have become the temples of the Holy Ghost.

J. B. HEARD.



NOT FAR!

NOT far, not far from the Kingdom,
 Yet in the shadow of sin,
 How many are coming and going,
 How few are entering in !

Not far from the golden gateway
 Where voices whisper and wait ;
 Fearing to enter in boldly,
 So lingering still at the gate ;

Catching the strain of the music
 Floating so sweetly along,
 Knowing the song they are singing,
 Yet joining not in the song.

Seeing the warmth and the beauty,
 The infinite love and the light ;
 Yet weary, and lonely, and waiting,
 Out in the desolate night !

Out in the dark, and the danger,
 Out in the night, and the cold,
 Though He is longing to lead them
 Tenderly into the fold.

Not far, not far from the Kingdom,
 'Tis only a little space ;
 But it may be, at last, and for ever,
 Out of the resting-place.

* * * * *

A ship came sailing and sailing
 Over a murmuring sea,
 And just in sight of the haven
 Down in the waves went she :

And the spars and the broken timbers
 Were cast on a storm-beat strand ;
 And a cry went up in the darkness,
 Not far, not far from the land !

F. SMITH.

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

DIOCESAN Conferences abound in October, and in the present year the proceedings at some of them have been even more noteworthy than those at the Croydon Congress. The discussions were more spirited and manly; there was a freer ventilation of opinion; altogether there was an air of reality and thoroughness which was lacking in the larger assembly. Assuredly, if we want to get a true idea of the present drift of Church thought, it would be much safer to trust the indications of such Conferences as those of Oxford, Lincoln, and Bath and Wells, than the speeches in the Congress. On many accounts the Oxford meeting was the most remarkable of the whole, for the plain and straightforward speaking, especially of some of the laymen, and for the evident determination to go to the root of the difficulties which at present disturb the relations between Church and State. It was strange that such an assembly should think it necessary to proclaim its adherence to the principle of the Union, but stranger still that the resolution could not be carried until two separate attempts, proceeding from the two opposing parties, had been made to amend it by introducing a qualifying clause. Practically they meant that the answer to the old question, "Is the Church worth preserving?" must depend on what the Church really is. The one said, "Give priests liberty to do as they will, and it is well that the Establishment should be upheld, but not otherwise." The other took up the challenge and retorted, "Make the priests obey the law, put down Romish innovations, maintain the old Protestantism, and then it will be worth while to stand by the Church, and then only." Neither was carried; but the discussion was eminently suggestive. It showed the hollowness of the talk about the Church being in a majority. This Conference was held in Oxford, and consisted of Church people only, yet it is tolerably clear that if any definition had been given of what the Church is, it is extremely doubtful whether a majority could have been secured in favour of its continuance. A continuation of the extremes would have defeated the orthodox centre, which alone is prepared to stand by the institution as it is. The case is only typical of the state of opinion in the country at large. The Church is able to boast a majority, only because there is no authoritative definition of what it is, and each party is able to assert that it is of its colour. The great effort of the Courts has been in every case to avoid a decision so positive as to remove an uncertainty, in virtue of which opposite schools are able to give their allegiance to the same institution, while each charges the other with treason, only to have the taunt retorted upon itself. It is a singular situation, but the Conference at Oxford is

one among many signs that the tension is becoming intolerable. And yet so soft are the appliances by which the pressure is reduced, that we may yet have to wait long before the bond of union is broken. Still the language of some of the speakers, and particularly of Mr. Walter, was very decided. Compared with the hesitating utterances of the clergy, even among the Evangelicals, it is very refreshing. Mr. Walter loves the Establishment, but he does not deem it so vital to the prosperity of the country or the progress of the truth as the Protestant principles for which it professes to contend. His warning to the priests is emphatic, and one to which they would do well to take heed. It is an evil omen for the Establishment when men of Mr. Walter's stamp avow their disgust with its proceedings.

The Lincoln Conference was much more decided in its attitude towards Dissenters and their claims. The Bishop gave the cue to its deliberations in the solemn style in which, speaking as though he were a divinely-appointed instrument of Heaven, he proclaimed the judgments of God against all and sundry abettors of the sin of sacrilege. With him it was of small importance whether the condemnation fell upon noble lords or most reverend archbishops, for to him had been intrusted the thunderbolts, and they must be hurled against the guilty, however high their position, or however great their claims to official respect. There was something almost indecent in the rebuke indirectly administered to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was reminded that his predecessors had erred in former times, and that a Bishop of Lincoln had withstood the Primate to the face, just as Dr. Wordsworth opposes Dr. Tait now. The Archbishop may probably smile at a sacerdotal assumption which has not even the merit of consistency with itself; but it is another of the misfortunes of the Anglican Church that it should have a Prelate advancing such preposterous claims. Who is this Dr. Wordsworth, who first condemns his own superior, and tells the majority of the House of Lords that if they dare to give effect to a policy whose manifest righteousness has compelled them to accept it, despite their strong prejudices, they will bring the judgments of a "jealous" God upon the land? Only a nominee of a Prime Minister, who has placed him on the Episcopal throne, from which he fulminates these anathemas. Yet a Sultan proclaiming a holy war, and summoning all Islam to rally to the banner of the Prophet, or a Pope, excommunicating all who will not accept his infallibility, and announcing the doom of Heaven against them, could not speak with more imperturbable self-confidence than this representative of an Erastian Establishment, whom the majority of "Catholic Christendom" would condemn as guilty of a treason as great as that which he alleges against the Nonconformists. The best friends of the Establishment will receive such utterances

either with contempt or indignation. But there are others whom this Episcopal example only encourages to a display of a virulence equal to the Bishop's own. Sir Charles Anderson was one of the Lincoln orators, and his speech was so remarkable that some parts of it are worth preserving. If the Liberation Society should ever think it wise to follow in the wake of Canon Ashwell, and collect a museum of the choice sayings of Church defenders, it will find a capital beginning in the report of the Lincoln Conference. As curiosities, they will be invaluable in the course of a few years, when we hope they will be as absolute and as rare as the tooth of some animal of the Palæozoic world. Even now Sir Charles³ Anderson would not find any countenance among the wiser and more liberal members of the Establishment. Here is a specimen :—

"Yes, all asperities are to be smoothed over, all bitterness and acidities neutralised, by Harrowby's alkali. All religious parties appeased, content, and happy. Those pious prints, the *Tablet*, the *Nonconformist*, the *Rock*, the *Record*, and the *Church Times*, will forthwith cork up their vinegar bottles, and, sitting down like brothers in the cave of harmony, dip their goosequills in oil of olives, anoint us with an unction of treacle and honey. How very delicious ! In short, we are to have the millennium by anticipation. But who in these days is to declare what is Christian, who is to sit in judgment on these services if they be written or printed, who is to permit or withhold permission, and, if they be extempore, as nine out of ten would be, who is to stand during the ceremony at the orator's elbow, to watch and judge, and, if he is transgressing, stop his jaw ? The Mormons call themselves Christians, at least they profess to believe in the Lord Jesus, and no doubt a member of that fraternity would on that account contend that whatever nonsense he might be pleased to utter, or whatever antics he might choose to perform, would be a Christian service, and possibly if an appeal were made to Lord Penzance's courts, he might rule on the same side. Now, how would you like to have a follower of that polygamist murderer who has lately escaped the hangman's halter he so richly deserved by taking his 'comfortable sleep,' as he called it in his will, in his cotton-padded coffin, leaving two millions of dollars, the fruits of roguery and blood, to his spurious brood, and a palace to his pet Sultana—I ask you, how you would like to have a disciple of that villain holding forth in our peaceful churchyards ? Yet such is quite possible, not to say probable, if they are opened on such terms as are proposed to skewbald creeds of modern fabrication. The fact is, Lord Harrowby's scheme, however well-meaning, is, in my opinion, quite impracticable, and I can't call it by any other name than a 'pious fraud.'"

A meeting, summoned as "a public conference of those who feel that agreement in theological opinion can no longer be held to be essential to religious communion," was held at Leicester during the week of the meetings of the Congregational Union. Its conveners were not well advised, to use no stronger term, in the choice of time and place. As it turned out, their own object was frustrated, for the

announcement drew together a number of gentlemen desirous to prove that Congregationalism, with all its freedom, has no sympathy with this extreme latitudinarianism. Had the proceedings not taken this course, the meeting might easily have been regarded all over the country as a branch of the Union, notwithstanding the public disclaimer of the secretary of any relation between them. We are satisfied that the conveners are too high-minded and honourable to have wished such an impression to go forth; but it would certainly have been extremely difficult to efface it. As it is, it has been made sufficiently evident to all, except those who are bent on wilful misrepresentation, that the action was that of an insignificant fraction, and that it was strongly condemned by the great mass of the ministers and delegates. We do not intend to discuss its principles now, but we must observe that those who adopt its platform have not only broken with all the traditions of Congregationalism, but have practically renounced the vital principles on which Christian Churches are established. It may be that many of them hold to the old truths as part of their personal faith, but that does not lead us to modify our statement. Christianity is an exclusive system. It knows of but one Name given under heaven among men whereby they can be saved, and to teach that there may be a spiritual life, which shall serve as the basis of true Christian fellowship, without faith in that Name, is practically to set aside its distinctive doctrines. It is idle to indulge in heroics, after the example of some speakers at the Conference, as to the absurdity of supposing that our poor hearts could be broader than that of God, that He would not accept those whom we love for their goodness, or that the Church should not include those whom God accepts. The question is not one of personal character, nor even of the judgment of God upon it, but of the true basis of Church fellowship. The leaders or promoters of the Conference would give us Churches in which the Resurrection of the Lord, the Incarnation, the Atonement, nay, the very existence of God, would be open questions. They would leave their members free to worship God, or the "Divine totality of being," and they would welcome to their communion alike those who regard the Saviour as a noble fanatic, and those who bow to Him as "God manifest in the flesh." We care not with what beauty of thought and language such an ideal be recommended, nor are we affected by the personal goodness of those who adopt it. All we can say is, that such communities would not be Christian Churches; and before any Congregational ministers attempt to work such a revolution in the bodies over which they preside, their first duty is to consult their members as to whether they desire thus to change the basis of their constitution, and if so, whether they can honourably retain possession of buildings erected by Christian men to be the homes of Christian Churches, and used for the advance of Christian truth.

BOOKS ON THE TABLE.

THE *Rector of Oxbury*, by James B. Baynard (Samuel Tinsley), is a three-volume novel written in the interests of the Establishment, or to speak with more strict correctness, for the exposure and annihilation of Dissent. As it has secured favourable notice from some of the Church journals, we opened it with the idea that we should find something very piquant and effective, but our expectations have not been fulfilled. As a story, it has about the average merit of its class, with the special recommendation that it has no sensational elements, and may while away an idle hour with those who can interest themselves in very commonplace people and the incidents of their ordinary life. Commonplace, indeed, we ought hardly to call the characters in this fiction, for though they are ignorant, and vulgar, and unattractive, they are of a type not very frequently met with. We suppose there may be people who conduct themselves in the way described in this book, but, fortunately for ourselves, we have not made their acquaintance, and we fancy that our readers will feel that they are equally strange to them. A less attractive group than the members of the Dissenting Church whose evil dealings with their young minister are here related, is not often met with, and it is tolerably certain that if they were the ordinary products of Dissent, the system would not be worth writing against. The book is, in fact, a new Salem Chapel, only of an inferior artistic type. Its title would seem to have been given on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, for though the rector does play a certain part in the tale, and is evidently intended to typify the educated Christian gentleman, whom the State so beneficently provides for every parish, and who cares for all his parishioners, including even the Dissenting preacher, to whom he ministers (though anonymously) temporal help as well as spiritual consolation, it is about this latter gentlemen and his woes that the book is devoted. The subject is not a new one, and there is nothing particularly novel in the mode of treatment, except that the extreme form in which the evils of Dissent are represented makes the picture resemble a caricature. The writer has at least this claim to the praise of originality, for while in most stories of a similar character there is some ground for the alienation between minister and people which forms their basis, here there is really none. We are asked to believe that a Church, having invited a young man to become their pastor, allow a discontented ironmonger, who had ceased to be a deacon but was a trustee for a small endowment belonging to the chapel, to work mischief to him, even before he was actually settled in the pastorate; that several

of the leading families were induced to form a hostile clique against the man they had just chosen as their spiritual guide ; and that his marriage to an amiable young Churchwoman was sufficient almost to empty the chapel at a stroke. Now all this is a little too much. We are far from saying that it is impossible to find a Staggers who abuses his power as a trustee in a fashion which is as unusual as it is discreditable, or a purse-proud Albert Winstock, or a Snooley and a Clatts, but that they should all meet in one Church and find in it no one capable of offering a stern resistance to them is, to say the least, highly improbable. What we should most complain of in the story is the absence of any fair attempt to exhibit the better side of Dissent. Granted even that poor Mr. Holland had been invited to a Church whose leaders had half repented of their invitation before the arrival of their minister and that he had therefore to encounter a series of petty annoyances, it is all but certain that this would have aroused a chivalrous spirit in his defence, and that it would not have been confined to a few individuals. It is very possible that a Dissenting congregation in a small town might be annoyed at the idea of their pastor choosing a Churchwoman for his wife, and of his marrying her at church ; but that they would, on this account, absent themselves in a body from the chapel, is too much for our credulity. Our space will not allow us to examine the book more in detail, or there are many inconsistencies and improbabilities we might point out. Still, we do not say that it may not be a narrative of facts, thinly disguised under a veil of fiction. Far be it from us to pronounce as to the possibilities of folly and spite. It may be that a Dissenting Church somewhere having fallen in with a minister as incompetent to guide men as Mr. Holland, did act with a stupidity and malice as great as that which is here depicted. But if such an extreme improbability should prove to be a fact, this is no true presentation of what Dissent is. If some young gentleman, having found in the Establishment that home which he sought in vain in Nonconformity, chooses to unburthen his griefs to the world, and to invite all to rejoice with him that he has been delivered from bondage and welcomed to the rest and freedom and geniality of the State Church, that is a matter for his own decision. It is a different matter if the world is asked to look on his narrative as a fair account of what a religious system is. No doubt Independency leaves more scope for the play of individual character than other systems, and where that is the case, there may be development of evil as well as of good. But there is in immense preponderance of good of which such a portraiture as this gives no idea, or it could not stand at all. No mode of fighting ecclesiastical battles is so easy as this caricaturing of opponents in fiction, but none is so unworthy, or in general so unprofitable. Where it is cleverly done by an artistic hand like that of Mrs.

Oliphant, it is effective up to a point, but that effect is rather to intensify bitterness and increase prejudice than to make converts. It is capable, too, of being employed on both sides, and if Dissenters choose to retaliate, they would certainly find no difficulty in getting materials. Aristocratic patrons using their power for family aggrandisement, traders in livings, and dishonoured clergymen, such as those of whom the Bishop of Peterborough once told us, whom they use as their tools, Low Church bigotry and High Church aggressiveness might furnish stories quite as damaging to the Establishment and quite as unfair in controversy as the "Rector of Oxbury" is to Dissent. As weapons for discussion, however, these stories are worthless, and become increasingly so as the struggle between Church and Dissent is passing out of the narrow field of sectarianism and assuming a national character. Such a story will be useful if it should serve to set before any Church the ugliness of conduct inconsistent with the rights of courtesy, the dictates of justice, and, above all, the law of Christ. Incidents approximating to those narrated in this book are far less probable or possible now than they were twenty years ago; but Dissenters will do well if they are not unwilling to take warning from an enemy, and even from an enemy who is unfair to them, to eschew a narrow and factious selfishness, as well as a bitter sectarianism, in all their Church proceedings, and to remember the Apostle's exhortation, to follow the things that are lovely and of good report at all times.

A new series of *Expository Essays and Discourses*, by Samuel Cox (Hodder and Stoughton), deserves the most cordial welcome we can accord to it. A more helpful book for students and ministers it would not be easy to find. Mr. Cox has a genius for exposition, which is very rare. He unites with true spiritual insight a keen critical faculty, and a familiarity with the scriptures which is the result of long and careful research. The chief value of his books is, that they do not so much relieve others from the necessity to labour, as indicate to them the way in which to work, and encourage them by the view of the results which attend honest work. They are not only instructive, but stimulating, and are, in fact, the treasures which the thoughtful preacher will most highly prize, and to which he will give the most honoured place on his shelves. * *Selections from the Writings of the Author of 'The Schonberg-Cotta Family,'* by a Friend (Daldy, Isbister and Co.), have been very carefully made, and form a volume of diversified interest and of considerable value. The extracts are arranged under the several heads of "Historical Characters," "Historical Scenes and Reflections," "Characters in Fiction," "Nature and Art," "Human Life," and "Spiritual Life." We had little idea that the series from which they are taken was so rich a reservoir.

The Congregationalist.

DECEMBER, 1877.

EDITOR'S ADDRESS.

EVER since I undertook the Editorship of this Magazine I have been sustained by a hearty sympathy, for which I cannot be adequately grateful. This sympathy has never shown itself in more generous forms than during the year which is now running rapidly to its close. To the friends who in many ways have given me such strong and decisive proofs of their interest in the CONGREGATIONALIST, I offer my most cordial thanks ; and I trust that the manner in which it has been conducted during 1877 will not make them care less for its success in 1878.

The responsibilities which rest upon the Congregational Churches of England and Wales are undiminished. During the last twelve months, indeed, these responsibilities appear to me to have become graver than ever. The progress of Ritualism in the Anglican Establishment has not been checked, and it is mainly to the Nonconformists that the country has now to look for the maintenance of a Protestant and Evangelical theology.

At such a time as this, it may be supposed by many that it is singularly unfortunate that questions should have been seriously raised and

seriously discussed among ourselves, affecting not merely the details of our ecclesiastical organisation, but the fundamental principles of our Church life. For myself, I do not regret that these questions have at last assumed a definite form, and become the subject of public controversy. For some years past it has seemed to me that many excellent men have failed to appreciate the intimate relations between the characteristic theology of the Congregational Churches and their characteristic polity. The theology and the polity stand or fall together. Recent discussions will help to make this apparent, and will, I trust, contribute to strengthen the loyalty of our Churches to the ecclesiastical principles which are historically identified with Congregationalism.

During the last three months I have been absent from England, and the CONGREGATIONALIST has been in the hands of my dear friend and comrade, the Rev. J. G. Rogers. I have come home with a faith which, if possible, is firmer than ever in the great principles which this Magazine was established to illustrate and defend. I trust that the knowledge which I have acquired of the ecclesiastical, and social, and political life of the United States may enable me to serve the Congregational Churches of England and Wales more intelligently and more efficiently.

R. W. DALE.



THE LEICESTER CONFERENCE.

IT is a long time since any incident in the internal history of Congregationalism has excited so much attention or aroused such strong emotion as the Conference at Leicester, to which we referred in one of our notes on the "Ecclesiastical Affairs" of last month. If we are to judge by the letters which appear in the *English Independent* and *Christian World*, or by those which reach ourselves, or by the concurrent testimony of those who have the best opportunities of knowing the facts, there is an agitation abroad among the Churches which is unusual both for its extent and its intensity. It pleases the promoters of the new movement to describe it as a scare, but this only shows how imperfectly they understand the feelings with which their action is regarded. There would be reason for alarm, indeed, if the faith of our ministers and people was such a feeble thing that they could be thrown into a state of panic by the deliverances at Leicester. Our new teachers exaggerate their own influence when they indulge in such a fancy. If, indeed, we were dwelling on a little island, peopled only by Congregationalists, there would have been little reason for the community at large to concern itself about these eccentricities on the part of a few of its members, except on their own account. That there is any prospect of these reforms exerting any widespread influence on the opinion of our Churches we do not believe, and if regard was had only to themselves or the result of their work, there would be little justification for such a troubling of the waters. Recognising as fully as even their friends could require us to do, the ability of their leaders, we think it necessary thus frankly to express our sense of the real strength of this movement, because of the extraordinary tone adopted by those who certainly have not yet earned the right to speak with authority. When a young minister who is but at the very beginning of his course writes as though he were already a master in Israel, we feel bound to protest against the assumption that he and his friends are to be esteemed as being an element of any numbers or importance in the Congregational Churches. Their action is viewed not with alarm, but with keen indignation, both because of the dishonour it does to Christ and His Gospel and the perverted representation which it gives of Congregationalism. There are numbers who naturally resent the thought that there may be Congregational ministers, members of the Congregational Union, some of whom deny the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Resurrection of Christ, and in truth reject a supernatural element in religion; and others who attach so little importance to these truths, that

though they hold them themselves, they are prepared to enter into Church fellowship with those who do not. They feel that the honour of their system is compromised ; that the liberty for which they have contended is imperilled by being thus abused ; above all, that the sovereign rights of our Lord and Saviour are invaded by this relegation of the doctrines of His person and work into the category of open questions. It has been their joy to think that in Congregational Churches there were points beyond all dispute, and they have been accustomed to speak of the substantial agreement of the Churches on all the vital doctrines without any formulated creed, as a noble proof of the security of liberty. If they are somewhat impatient of those who would rob them of this glorying, they are surely not to be blamed, still less is it to be supposed that they are afraid of these new theories and their results.

The present excitement has no doubt been increased by a widespread feeling of distrust which had previously been abroad, and which has found in this Conference a justification of all its anxieties and fears. The idea has been sedulously fostered by certain parties that among Congregationalists there had been a considerable departure from the old faith. With some it has been the result of a genuine anxiety for the maintenance of the truth, and an inability to comprehend new modes of thought and expression, while in others there has probably been not a little sectarian jealousy or ecclesiastical antagonism. The members of highly-organised systems, whose creeds are carefully formulated and jealously watched, are naturally suspicious of a denomination which has always refused to employ such methods for guarding its orthodoxy. They fancy freedom means latitude, and are not sorry to seize upon any evidence that favours the view. Some of them have not been slow to express their sorrow that Congregationalists were becoming so tainted with heresy, and to utter very lugubrious predictions of what the future of Evangelical Dissent might be in this country if there were not others who would prove faithful when its old champions had been found so faithless. To all these external critics the Conference would have been a confirmation of their worst anticipations, but for the very decided manifestation of adverse opinion which it has served to elicit, and which it may be hoped will allay their fears as to the theology of the denomination, whatever the impression it may leave as to individual men.

Perhaps the most obvious cause for the reproach to which Congregationalists have been exposed because of their alleged unsoundness in the faith, was the attitude which they took in the Education controversy. There were many who could not believe then, and cannot believe now, that the opposition to the introduction of the Bible into the schools was not inspired by some faltering in allegiance to the Bible itself. The Bible, in truth, was little more than a mere fetich to numbers, who never

gave any proof of zeal for it except in their attempt to force it into public schools ; and yet many excellent people accepted the aid of this class—the class which would shout at once for Beer and the Bible—and could not understand that on the opposite side there were many whose sincere love to the Bible prevented them from thus allowing it to be degraded into a symbol of party warfare, and sustained by force of human law. It was in vain to point to the earnestness with which these supposed enemies of the Book were seeking to promote its use, to their ready sympathy with the Bible Society, to their efforts for Biblical instruction in Sunday-schools. The sufficient answer to the whole was that they were opposed to its use in Board schools ; and as the Congregational Union by vote after vote sustained the objection, it was inferred with equal wisdom and charity that the love of the old Book which had been characteristic of the fathers was dying out in this generation of Dissenters. To those who reasoned thus, it may be somewhat of a surprise to find that one of the leaders of this new movement—the chairman, indeed, of the Leicester Conference—has been throughout an advocate of the reading of the Bible in Board schools. This fact alone ought to be sufficient to convince all that the position which men took on this question cannot of itself be regarded as supplying any indication of their theological tendencies. Some who most earnestly opposed the introduction of Biblical teaching into schools, for which unbelievers as well as believers had to pay, and in which the only true mode of securing equal justice was to separate the religious instruction from the ordinary work of the school, were among the most devout believers in the Bible ; while others who were ready to include the Bible with the ordinary teaching, did so on the avowed ground that it was not to be treated in a different way from other books, and was to be used as a great classic of our language. There will be some advantage derived from the Conference if one result be the removal of this impression, which has been based on a most erroneous idea, and yet has wrought no little mischief.

The controversy which has subsequently arisen has started so many issues which have no direct relation to the main question, that it is necessary in the first place to clear the discussion of a good deal of misapprehension. One of the first attempts in a case of this kind is to get up a cry of persecution. But never, certainly, could there be less foundation for it than in the present instance. The suggestion that there might be a religious association without any basis of theological agreement has, doubtless, startled and shocked many, who have not hesitated to express their feelings ; and if their language has not always been properly guarded, that is only one result of the excitement of which those who have created it should be the very last to complain.

The fact that the leaders in this new movement were members of the Congregational Union, who did not shrink from expressing very advanced views of their own, gave point and direction to their natural indignation. They asked, "Is it really to be understood that the Congregational Union affords a shelter to the professors of a mystical Pantheism, or the unbelievers in the divinity and sacrifice of the Lord? If so, so much the worse for the Union. For ourselves, all pleasure in it is gone, all wish to maintain it is at an end. We entered it as Christians, to unite with fellow-Christians in a work for our common Lord. But if within its membership there is uncertainty as to whether we have a Lord or no, our sympathy with it is utterly quenched. We will either stand alone, or we will seek other associations where there is real agreement as to faith in the Gospel which Paul preached, and which we have received, that Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He rose again the third day." What is there of tyranny, of injustice, of persecution in all this? It proceeds simply on the old saying, "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" No doubt, even in the closest fellowships, there will be some diversity of opinion, but if there were no underlying agreement, there could be no true friendship or communion. To what point this agreement should extend is for each party to decide. But here, by the express declaration by one party to the pact, it does not exist. They frankly say that they wish to be members only of a Christian Union, and that in their view there can be no Christianity where Jesus Christ is not worshipped as the incarnate God, trusted as the risen Saviour, exalted as the true Lord of His Church. It may be said, on the other hand, that they are extremely narrow, and perhaps it would be of little avail to answer that their narrowness is shared by ninety-nine-hundredths, or some larger proportion of the Christian Church. But that is not the question. Even the narrowest people are not to be trampled under foot, or regarded as without claim to an independent opinion, or right of free action. Narrow as they may be, they have their own preferences, and, provided they do not interfere with the liberty of others, there is no obvious reason why they should not gratify them. Were we even to grant that they would be all the better for the wider fellowship into which it is desired to allure them, and for the new instruction which they might thus receive, still, even such privileges are not to be forced upon them against their consent, especially when their refusal is with them a matter of conscience.

If, indeed, anyone taught or believed that whosoever will be saved it is necessary, first of all, that he should belong to the Congregational Union, then there would be some reason for the protest against any attempt to exclude, whether by direct or indirect means, certain in-

dividuals from its fellowship. It would certainly be necessary, first of all, to inquire whether they had violated any of the conditions which attach to membership, and whether, with a strict regard to equity, they could be deprived of the privileges which its members possess. But the Congregational Union makes no pretensions to any prerogative such as that here supposed, and all that would be forfeited by exclusion from its communion would be the fellowship itself. It does not profess to include all Christians, still less all who may be regarded as good people. John Henry Newman would be recognised by most, if not all, of its members as a man of saintliness of spirit and purity of life; but no one would say that he was a fit member for the Union. For other, but kindred reasons, Dr. James Martineau would not be regarded as eligible for membership, even by those who have formed the most exalted estimate of his religious character and moral worth. Chunder Sen was introduced to the assembly as a visitor, and received a kindly welcome; but if any of his friends had proposed to enrol his name in its membership, there can be no doubt as to the reception which the motion would have met, for even at the risk of appearing discourteous to a stranger the Union would have refused to be disloyal to the truth. In short, the Congregational Union does not profess to be a gathering of all the piety that is abroad, but simply of the Evangelical piety which finds its home in Congregational Churches. Unless it can be proved that it is wrong for people who hold a certain view of Christianity, and maintain that there can be no Christianity unless its fundamental principles be maintained, to associate together, and to restrict their association to men who accept this basis of communion, it is hard to see on what ground those who take this view of the Union, and are determined at all risks to carry it out, are to be condemned.

If this be once understood, a good deal of the unmeaning cry about liberty, which has been made to do service for argument, must perforce cease. The wildest talk is sometimes heard on this point. If there had been some intention on the part of the committee of the Union to institute a number of tests which should effectually prevent all freedom of thought, and shut up within a narrow cell the intellectual and spiritual life and energy of the denomination, there could hardly be stronger utterances than some which this controversy has already evoked, and that before either the Union or its committee has given any sign. There can be no doubt that the extreme into which some who take credit for special breadth have gone, has a tendency to produce reaction. But there is quite enough power and judgment in the Union to guard against any improper curtailment of liberty. The cause of freedom, however, will not be served by unwise advocates who seek to twist the language of those who may be regarded as in any way representative men to

their purpose, by leaving out of sight the conditions under which it was spoken, and the circumstances in the light of which it has to be interpreted. Speaking in the Congregational Union, its members have felt that they were speaking as Christian men to Christian men, and did not require in every paragraph or sentence to introduce a fresh profession of faith, or even to herald every assertion of liberty with a qualification indicating that in the Union itself that liberty could be exercised only on the well-understood condition—loyalty to Evangelical principles. There is no desire to restrict the freedom of those whose speculations lead them to renounce that faith altogether. There is, on the contrary, the fullest acknowledgment that only as the Gospel approves itself to the individual conscience can there be any real faith, and consequently, that resort to authority would be as unavailing as it would be illegitimate. But this does not interfere with the assertion, that if that faith has not been reached, or has been renounced, the qualification for membership in the Union does not exist. How this touches any right which we are bound to respect, it is hard to see. A place in the Congregational Union is not essential either to a man's natural or spiritual life. It is not a necessary part either of his civil or religious inheritance. If he be kept outside, the worst he can say is, that a voluntary association has laid down laws which are inconsistent with his broad views of what religious fellowship ought to be, and has so raised barriers against him. Let him condemn the short-sightedness and pity the infatuation of its members, if he will, but let him not delude himself with the thought that any wrong has been done to him by the exclusion. It is strange that if a man has once been received into a society, there is always a feeling that he is aggrieved if he is afterwards forced to withdraw, even though he has really forfeited all title to membership. Why Mr. Ripley, for example, should have desired to remain in the Reform Club after he had adopted Conservative opinions, it is very difficult to comprehend, and still more so to see how he could suppose that he had a right to hold the position when he had ceased to belong to the party to which the Club is attached. Yet there was keen discussion, and even strong feeling, about an exclusion which it might have been supposed Mr. Ripley would have anticipated by a voluntary withdrawal from those with whom he had no sympathy. There seems really no limit to the unwarrantable demands made upon us on behalf of liberty. There are men who seem to think themselves justified in trampling upon the rights and liberties of others, under this ever-ready plea that they must assert their freedom. We should be sorry to say that there is consciously any such purpose here, but this is the practical issue. The liberty of those who cling to the old faith is

essentially narrowed if they are told that they cannot lay down the terms of their association, so as to make it a Christian body, without becoming persecutors of those who reject the Christian doctrines, and yet may wish to join them. Congregationalists may be flattered by this preference for their fellowship, and they may find so much to admire in the character of the men who show it, that they may regret to close the doors against them. But a higher feeling of loyalty to Christ may constrain them to take this course, and if they are not to obey this sentiment, they are robbed of their Christian liberty.

The more closely, indeed, the circumstances of the present movement are examined, the more clearly will it appear that the friends of Evangelical truth have not shown any desire to put improper restrictions on liberty of thought. It may more reasonably be questioned whether they have not been too supine and apathetic. If they had been anxious for a heresy hunt, they would certainly have had no difficult task, and would have earned the gratitude of numbers who have felt that too much indulgence has been shown to the novelties in doctrine that have found their way into some of our pulpits. It is not necessary to discuss here whether this forbearance was wise. It certainly indicated a true faith in liberty, and a reluctance to interfere even with its extravagance, so long as the essential principles of the Gospel were preserved intact. After the publication of books in which theological speculation was carried to an extreme which seemed to be irreconcilable with faith in the historic Christ, or even a personal God, it might have been thought the limit of freedom had been passed, and that a Christian body would have felt constrained to enter its protest against such teaching on the part of one of its own members, even if it had taken no other measures to free itself from any suspicion of sympathy with such opinions. But nothing was done. The Union stood upon the strength of its reputation, and upon the well-known character of the teaching given in its pulpits, and—with a very intelligible reluctance to stir up the fires of theological strife—took no action. It is not our place either to defend or to condemn this patient endurance of what was intensely distressing to a number of minds; nor would we go so far as to say that it would have been possible, even in the absence of any demonstration on the opposite side, to pursue this policy much longer. All that we do is to note the fact, which must be a most important element in the formation of a judgment on any proceedings which may now be taken, that the present excitement is due to aggressive action on the part of those who claim to be the representatives of a broader theology.

The Conference at Leicester was not summoned without thought and deliberation, nor, it is right to add, without dissuasive appeals

privately addressed to some of its promoters. It was the outcome of a meeting held some months previously, and was certainly intended to be much more than a gathering *pro hac vice*. What expectations of sympathy its promoters entertained we know not, but there can be no reasonable doubt that they intended to initiate a movement which should lay a basis of religious communion in spiritual sympathy, independent of theological creeds altogether. Character, and not opinion, conduct, and not dogma, was to be set forth as the ground of religious fellowship. At first sight there is something very attractive in such an idea, and we have no desire to deny that there is in it a germ of truth, which we doubt not has captivated a certain number of those who have associated themselves with the movement, without sufficiently considering its full significance. Not only are there many men who are better than their creeds, but there are creeds which we should reject as erroneous, that nevertheless contain more of the truth than those who hold them would recognise themselves. We are fairly puzzled at times, for example, by some of Mr. Picton's expressions, and find it as difficult to reconcile his utterances with each other as to harmonise his teaching as a whole with any true idea of Christianity. Not only, therefore, do we cheerfully unite in admiring the noble qualities of the man, but we are ready to admit that at times it does seem as though (to use his own words) "it is, I verily believe, more a strife about words than anything else, because in our innermost heart of hearts we all mean the same thing." Alas! there are other statements which convince us that we are far as the poles asunder on questions which we at least regard as vital. His case, however, is only an illustrative one. There are many who have come to regard the Evangelical system as little more than an old-world superstition, who, nevertheless, have strong spiritual sentiments (how far due to the lingering influences of a creed which once they held, but have now rejected, it is not possible for us to decide), and it seems harsh to say that there can be no fellowship between them and those who not only hold fast by the old faith, but feel that to surrender it would be to lose the inspiration and strength of spiritual life altogether. It is this vision of a broader and more comprehensive Christian sympathy which has been so alluring to numbers, and blinded them to the grave error on which it rests, who fancy that it is still possible to retain their personal trust in Christ, and even their belief in certain doctrines as essential to the vitality of that trust, and yet to enter into a religious fellowship in which these fundamental truths shall be open questions. How those who humbly rest on Christ as their Saviour and devoutly worship Him as their God; who accept in its full sense the declaration of Peter, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given

among men whereby we must be saved ;" who share anything of the devotion which led Paul to say, " Yea, doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ;" or, in short, who feel that Christ to them is everything ; that if He were a myth, or an impostor, or at best but the noblest of men, they were of all men the most miserable, and that if they did not love Him they must be Anathema, can be content to see the rights of their Master brought into dispute, or even treated as though they were non-existent, is simply unintelligible. We, at least, have not so learned Christ, nor, we would fain hope, have all those whose presence at the Conference, or place on the Committee which summoned it, seems to indicate a sympathy with its aims. They may have been carried away by an excessive charity, and forgotten that even charity will not excuse the sin of disloyalty to Christ. They may have looked only at a broad general principle, to which they could agree without following it into all its conclusions and applications. Perhaps they supposed that they were simply extending the hand of Christian friendship to some members of communities generally regarded heterodox, and to teachers of opinions which seem to be hostile to Christianity, and that in doing so all that they committed themselves to was a recognition of the personal goodness of these individuals, or, at the utmost, a belief in the possibility of real spirituality in the heart and Christian beauty in the life, where there was even a preponderance of error in the creed. One of the champions of the Conference, indeed, went so far as to assert that the real point at issue was as to the eternal condemnation of men for mere errors of opinion. Had that been all, no controversy would ever have arisen. Judgment belongs only to God, and He to whom that judgment is committed distinctly tells us that " many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." It is not for us to anticipate the decisions of His tribunal. The utmost we can do is to proclaim the principles by which, as He has taught us, that judgment will be guided. The discussion is not at all of future judgment, or of personal character, or even of our own relations to individuals, or even of the possibilities of communion between men of diverse opinions, but of Church life and Church organisation. The real questions raised at Leicester, though not explicitly set forth, really were, Can there be Christian Churches without a recognition of the special doctrines of Christianity ; and more remotely, but not less certainly, Is the Congregational Union, to which the leaders belong, prepared to adopt this principle ? We are quite aware that many will deny, and with perfect honesty, that these were the issues raised, and will endeavour to limit the controversy to a much narrower area. But this is certainly the aspect which it assumes to the Churches generally, and we

are greatly mistaken if those who initiated the movement would not confess that it is a fair interpretation of its objects.

The Conference was, according to the circular which convened it, to be composed of those "feeling that agreement in theological opinion can no longer be held to be essential to religious communion." We may note that the very summoning of such a meeting is a sufficient answer to those who would fain have the world believe that the Congregational Union is a body in which this principle has already been recognised. If anyone has entered the Union with an idea that here he had found a Christian fellowship, whose members were free to deny Christ, or to resolve God into a "divine totality of being," he must have been strangely ignorant of its history, and of the principles on which it was constituted. It is a Union of Congregational Churches, whose primary object is "to uphold and extend Evangelical religion." The definition is no doubt sufficiently vague to admit of dispute, or to put it more correctly, is broad enough to include those who hold the essential doctrines of Evangelical truth. Up to a certain point, however, it ought to be distinct enough for practical purposes; it leaves every man to decide for himself whether he is in sympathy with the promotion of Evangelical religion on any honest interpretation of the term; but it certainly indicates that they only should enjoy the fellowship of the Union. There is thus what may be called an "unwritten creed," regarding which there has been a good deal of declamation which comes to very little. That creed is not only perfectly well understood, but it is tacitly recognised in the convening of the Conference. That Conference, indeed, has its own creed, written or unwritten as may be, just as every other religious body has, for even if its basis be simply the denial of all other creeds, that becomes itself a creed. But with the Conference the creed is blazoned on its very front. Its one article is, "I believe that agreement in theological opinion can no longer be held to be essential to religious communion." Whether Congregationalists will feel themselves flattered by the fact that there are those who have joined their Union under the idea that it answered to this description, that in it was liberty without any law, and that its members were free to set aside all beliefs, is to say the least very questionable. But what we wish to insist on is, that the promoters of the Conference did not regard it in this light, or, instead of calling this separate meeting, they would have sought to induce the Union to carry out the idea of its own constitution. The Rev. Joseph Wood, who was one of the committee of the Conference, and who must have understood its views, after expounding its leading principle, distinctly said, "One reason why they had met together was to give that idea a public platform, to see how far there was any feeling in favour of it, *especially*

among the Congregational ministers of their Union. It appeared to some of them that there was a feeling in that direction, that it was possible to hold communion with persons who differed as widely as Unitarians and Evangelicals." Perhaps, by this time, Mr. Wood has learned how possible it is to mistake the consent of a few friendly spirits for the voice of a large community, and begins to see that instead of the feeling on which he calculated, there is among Congregationalists everywhere, ministers and laymen alike, a strong recoil from the suggestion that they should sacrifice what they hold to be the sovereign rights of their Divine Lord on the altar of sentimental charity. He does not, indeed, state the case fully. The question is not whether there can be communion between Evangelicals and Unitarians, and it is not fair to raise it in such a form as to be essentially misleading. What was suggested was that there might be the life of goodness in Buddhists, in Pantheists, in Mahommedans, and that where there was, we might waive such differences as those about the divinity of our Lord, the sacrifice of the Cross, or the personalty of God Himself, and enter into religious communion with men whose beliefs are not only abhorrent to us, but utterly destructive of all that we most prize and desire to preserve. That any man can believe that the Congregational Union ever proclaimed liberty of this kind is passing strange. Mr. Wood's speech shows that he and his friends were under no such misapprehension.

The endeavour to eke out a defence of this novel conception of the Congregational Union as a Congress of Churches or individuals without any agreement except on questions of polity by appeal to the words of former Chairmen and others, may seem ingenious, but its fairness is more than doubtful. Whether it be honest to take isolated passages in assertion and vindication of liberty, and parade them in support of opinions which are directly contrary to the whole tenor of the speeches from which they are taken, is a question which we must leave to those who attach supreme importance to conduct. They may be able to determine whether such misrepresentation is in harmony with any true ideal of goodness, or whether there is any charity in the insinuation that if the speakers do not accept the interpretation now put upon their words, contrary as it is to the spirit and tendency of their reasonings, they have been imposing upon the world and catching a fleeting applause by a rhetoric which had no meaning. Under the old Christian system we should have condemned such a mode of warfare as dishonourable and discourteous, and if it be in accordance with the new ethics of controversy, it would appear that we are likely to gain nothing on the side of conduct which is to compensate for the serious losses we shall sustain in definiteness of doctrine.

There is nothing new, however, in this policy. It is neither

more nor less than the old and very simple expedient of forcing us to choose between a severe and unbending uniformity and an unrestrained latitude. Thus the *Christian World*, after quoting some sentences from a sermon of Dr. Allon's on the "Sorrows of Development," says: "We trust that Dr. Allon and other distinguished preachers, whose words often fire the generous aspirations and enthusiasm of young hearts, will remember that their hearers (many of them at least) will seek the modern application of such truths as these. They will apply them to the last new 'heresy,' and, remembering the words which seemed like a revelation of light to them, they will ask, 'Is it not possible that the new doctrines which even this very day are struggling to the light, may be, after all, some new and more glorious forms of the old truth? Is it not possible that this outcry, deprecation, apprehension, and grief, may not be the 'sorrow of development?'" Quite true, and Dr. Allon would be as ready to confess it as his reviewer. But what then? It does not follow that the possibilities they started would be verified on further examination. There have been many ideas once branded as "heresy" which have afterwards vindicated their right to be accepted as truths; but that does not prove that every new opinion which men call "heresy" is therefore true. There are many points, once regarded as vital principles, which are now admitted to be open questions, on which good men may differ without either doubting the Christianity of the other; but we are not entitled to infer that there are no vital principles. We have certainly been learning to discriminate between the truth and the human theories about it, and to recognise the possibility of great changes in the latter, whereas the former is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" but surely those who take this position are not logically forced to allow that it is of little importance whether a man hold the truth, provided his conduct be right. We are certainly not of those, whoever they may be, who assert that "people who cannot interpret the Scriptures as they do, or accept their metaphysical creeds, are therefore heathens, and will be disowned by Christ," and we should earnestly recommend all who love the Gospel to abstain from such condemnations, but we are not, therefore, shut up to a belief in a Christianity without a creed at all.

The weapon is a two-edged sword, though those who employ it do not seem to perceive it. If a man who recognises the wisdom of changes in systems which have been fashioned by fallible men is to be reproached because he protests against novelties which he holds to be erroneous, and branded as inconsistent or insincere because he will not compromise that which he believes to be of Divine authority, it is not surprising if many insist that the only safe attitude is

that of stolid and absolute immobility. "Walk in the old paths" (is the cry of those who look with unconcealed satisfaction on these endeavours to force on their friends, whom they have often reproached for unwise liberality, conclusions from which they recoil and opinions they hate), "walk in the old paths, for there alone is safety. In them is a straight road, about which there can be no mistake. Turn to the right hand or the left, and you will be lured on to utter unbelief." Men who have faith alike in liberty and truth will know how in patience to possess their own souls. They take their stand on the very simple but very trustworthy principle, that all prophets and their teachings must be tried on their own merit. They will not assume that a doctrine is true merely because it is new, but neither will they reject it as heresy without examination.

These champions of freedom would, indeed, be open to censure if, when called on fairly to apply their own principles, they faltered, and sought to bind others by restrictions which they would not accept themselves. But is it so with those who deprecate the Leicester movement, though they have previously contended for liberty in the Congregational Union? They do not pronounce any verdict of personal character, or even attempt to say to what extent a man's doctrinal errors may poison the springs of spiritual life. To His own Master each man must stand or fall. They have no wish to prevent the most full and searching discussion of every dogma, nor are they prepared to deny that, in individual cases, there may be real spiritual sympathy between themselves and those who profess views which they esteem incompatible with the retention of the Christian faith at all. It is a very different matter when these individual cases are made to serve as a basis for the statements, put forth with such fulness and confidence, that conduct is the basis of discipleship, and that conduct is independent of a faith in any dogmas. It is possible to reject such views as alike unphilosophical and unscriptural, and to contend that the rejection of historic Christianity means the death of the Christian spirit and the loss of the Christian life, even while admitting that there are men who have reached this degree of unbelief who, nevertheless, seem to retain much of the Christ-like temper and character. These exceptions may be explained, and do not affect the general principle that to part with the Divine Christ as a Saviour and a Lord, is to destroy the very foundation of the Christian life. Are those who hold this to be reproached with inconsistency because they insist that even the wide liberty which the Congregational Union proclaims is conditioned and limited by this loyalty to the vital principle of the Gospel? Mr. Rogers, whose address of May, 1874, has been used in defence of this supposed latitude, indicates this point not obscurely in the very passage quoted:

"If," he says—"what is more difficult, perhaps, to admit—our theology has been undergoing a silent revolution; if we see *that certain things have been supposed to belong to the essence of the Gospel which we have learned are at best but secondary questions; if we feel that some of our modes of statement, and even some of our opinions, need modifications*, let us be free and bold enough to follow truth openly wherever it leads." So say we to-day; but let it be observed that distinction is made between this "essence of the Gospel" and "secondary questions," or the "modes of statement and even opinions." Even in relation to the Gospel there is no wish to fetter any man's liberty; and the declaration in question, whatever be its worth, distinctly recognises that there are essential doctrines of that Gospel which that Union holds, and that those who reject them have disqualified themselves for its fellowship.

The question returns, and is not to be answered by mere declamation about liberty. Do the points which have been raised touch the essence of the Gospel? The best way of meeting it is to take the statements of the representative men of the movement. Here is the inquiry stated by the Chairman of the Conference, Rev. Mark Wilks:

"Would the Free Churches of England, Baptist and Independent, come to the conclusion that if a man could no longer believe in, say, the resurrection of Christ or the incarnation of Christ, in a preternatural sense, in that man spiritual life dwells not, and with him the Congregational and Free Churches generally would have no communion? The question, then, arises, What is the number of members of our Free Churches, lay and ministerial, who are prepared to say spiritual life is independent of creed, of doctrine, of metaphysical and theological dogmas; not independent, of course, of moral dogmas and doctrines, but that all creeds except those which have respect to conduct are non-essential to the maintenance and sustenance of spiritual life? These are the inquiries that we place before ourselves."

About the reply which would be returned to these questions by the Congregational Churches there can be no doubt. A Church exists for a definite purpose. It has a message to deliver, a work to do, an influence to exert, and it can be fit for such service only as it knows in whom it has believed and what it has to teach the world about Him. It may tolerate individual eccentricities, so long as they do not compromise its testimony and are understood to be divergences from its rule which are indulged in consideration of some high qualities of character in him who is allowed the privilege of fellowship; but it cannot carry this forbearance so far as to surrender its own principles. How anyone who treats the great historic facts of Christianity as old-world fables, which in the process of religious evolution are rapidly being relegated to their true position among the legends of the past, can desire to celebrate a festival which loses all meaning if this view be true, it is hard to comprehend. But if some spiritual affinities should draw such an one

to the fellowship of a Congregational Church at the Lord's Supper, he should at least understand that the Church regards that service as one of faith and love to Him who died and rose again for our sins, and holds that it can be nothing short of an utter mockery if there be no faith in the facts or in the doctrines based upon it, no belief that there is a sin which Christ only can pardon, and that His death was an atonement for that sin, and His resurrection the seal of the Gospel of forgiveness, the earnest of our inheritance of immortality and life. If the testimony of the Church be thus clear and explicit, it ought to end all difficulty. If this be set forth as the real meaning of the act, how can a man who denies all the truths it is intended to symbolise desire to take part in it? Whatever his drawings to a Congregational Church, it is surely far better that he should crucify them, than that an element of unreality should be introduced into Christian fellowship.

Mr. Picton takes the same position, and indeed puts it more strongly in his latest utterance. Let us say that no one can feel more deeply than ourselves the force of the tender appeals, the earnest cravings after Christian unity and fellowship, the plaintive lamentations over the isolation to which such opinions as his might doom a man who, in his own heart, still clings to Christ. We wish we could respond to them as he would desire, but we dare not. So far as he is individually concerned, we can understand how much that which wounds and shocks Christian people in his statements may be due simply to an extreme mysticism, and that he himself has not lost his faith in the loving Christ. But that does not affect our view of his teaching, and we are bound frankly and honestly to say that we cannot regard it as compatible with a faith in Christianity, and that whatever be his aim, those who accept it are sure to drift into an utter rejection of the Gospel. He presents the case thus, and we have no objection to accept the statement :

"A young man may be taken with the 'vision hypothesis' of the resurrection without at all losing his devotion to the spirit of Jesus. He may become convinced that the evidence for the raising of Lazarus is insufficient, while all the while the raising of his own soul from the death of self-worship to the life of God is a palpable fact in his experience. Now, is it not a perilous and a cruel thing to drive this youth off to lectures on molecular mechanics? No doubt kind and liberally-disposed ministers will stretch a point in such cases if they can. But the prevalent notion that religion is necessarily bound up with certain historical beliefs is too strong for them. The Sunday-school class must be given up; the prayer-meeting feels unaccountably cold; a suspension of attendance at the communion is suggested, with hopes that the youth will wrestle with his doubts. But he has got beyond that now. He does not see why he should wrestle with canons of historical criticism. His disbelief is magnified in dignity by the consequences it carries with it. No wonder, if injudicious treatment begets intellectual pride and self-importance

Then, not till then, his religion begins to be lost as well as his former historical opinions. How much better would it be if he were told, once for all, that the thing of main importance was not belief about miracles, but communion with the Spirit of Christ."

In answer to all this, we have only to say that we deny the possibility of preserving this communion with the Spirit of Christ, when the historic Christ, the Christ such as the Church has known Him, the Christ who raised Lazarus, and Himself rose from the dead, the Christ who was God manifest in the flesh, has been lost. It is one of the vainest dreams in which a man can indulge to fancy that the spiritual influence of the Christ can be retained when all that is distinctive about His person and work has been frittered away; when the Gospels are regarded as a collection of myths; and when the doctrines of Christianity are treated as mere metaphysical subtleties. Let us attempt to conceive of the Christ who will remain if once this view be accepted. We shall still have a man, wonderful alike in spirit and wisdom and work, though how we have even him is not very clear, for the Gospels, which alone are the record of his life, are discredited, and, in fact, if they were accepted, would present a very different personage from Him to whom we are now taught to look up with reverence. Still we have the words, and those words are wise and gracious, but their power was derived from their association with the name of Christ. You may label the biography and the teaching with the name of Socrates, or any other you please to select, for it would be just as appropriate and the effect would be as great. This is Christ no longer, and the power which you expect him to exert because the very name of Christ now acts as a magic spell upon human hearts, has departed from it. The world says, "Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who is this?"

It is sad if our young people are really being estranged from the teaching of the Church, but the last thing which the Church should do in order to retain them is to tamper with what it believes to be truth. Our firm conviction is that much of the evil now deplored has arisen from the lack of decision and certainty in the proclamation of the Gospel; and thus the present controversy will not be without its beneficial result if it inspire us with more boldness and make us feel the necessity of a more definite teaching. For ourselves, we are content to belong to the "fanatical, irreconcilable remnant" of which Mr. Picton speaks, rather than compromise in the slightest degree the Gospel which we have received. We have no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the Union will accept the same position, and plainly say that it would rather part with the members for whom it has the most profound respect, and even affection, than allow its testimony to be weakened. It can endure the reproach of narrowness and even

bigotry, but it cannot, even in the interests of freedom itself, and still more it cannot in consistency with loyalty to its Lord, endorse the idea that Congregationalism is a synonym for the negation of all belief, and that it does not care to inquire whether the pastors of the Churches associated in it teach Buddhism or Pantheism, provided they lead good lives and preside over self-governing communities.

We have spoken strongly, because we feel deeply on this subject ; but, before closing, we wish emphatically to say that our conflict is against principles, not against individuals. We believe that the attempt to divorce Christian doctrine and Christian life is most dangerous, and we have not hesitated to say this with all plainness and decision. We do not deny that there are phenomena of individual character which may seem contrary to our view, but we hold that these are capable of explanation without our being forced on the extreme conclusion that the spirit and power of Christianity are independent of its facts and doctrines. We hold that the living and spiritual force of the Gospel is derived from the personal Christ. Reduce Him to a level with Plato or Confucius, or make the difference between them one of degree only, and that power—the inspiration of all true Christian character and motive—is lost for ever. Plato instructs by his writings, and Jesus will add to this the influence of His perfect life, but nothing more. The constraining power of His love—that which has not only made missionaries and confessors, but is now, as it ever has been, the source of all the devotion and piety of Christendom—will be gone, and, as the consequence, Christianity itself must ultimately perish also. Those who menace us with such a loss ought not to wonder if we refuse in any way to countenance the idea that their teaching can be Christian teaching. If there are any who profess the same faith and love to our Lord which we seek to cherish, who are still able to fraternise with those who deny His Godhead, disbelieve in His resurrection, and reject His Atonement ; we have not so learned Christ. We believe that He must be everything, or He will be nothing ; and, therefore, we emphatically say that for us to have Christian fellowship with them—believing as they do that the truths we most fully prize are worn-out superstitions—would only be to add another to the many unrealities of which the world is already too full.

GOLDEN TEXTS.*

DECEMBER 2.—“*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples : and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*”—1 Cor. x. 11.

THE two most important words in this verse are not so accurately translated in our English version as they might be. If we render the verse thus, “*Now all these things happened unto them for a typical purpose, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages (or ‘dispensation’) have reached,*” we should have a clearer idea of the Apostle’s meaning as he wrote these words. He regards the incarnation and death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as bringing us to the “last ages” in the history of the human race in this world. “The fulness of the times,” or, to use the expression found both in the words of our Lord (Matt. xiii. 39) and in the epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. ix. 26), “the consummation of the ages,” are other Scriptural terms, denoting, with slightly varying shades of meaning, the same great fact. What St. Paul is thinking of is not so much the end of this material world in which we live—although “the end of the ages” will ultimately involve that too—but the close of a long series of God’s dealings with mankind, the final revelation of God in the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the human race, which thereby enters on the last and most critical period of its moral probation and development. But since this present “age,” or “dispensation,” is not only last in order of time, but last in importance as well—not only the close, but the “consummation” of all that God has to reveal of Himself to man—it follows that all past ages, and specially the great historic facts in the revelation of God to the Jews, must have been a typical foreshadowing of this “end of the ages.” In a unique and peculiar sense the whole history of the Jews, their relation to God, and God’s relation to them, were a “type,” a “parable,” a “shadow,” of that last and crowning dispensation that is summed up in Christ.

And now we see how our translation really weakens the meaning of

* In the Lessons of the Sunday-School Union for 1877, there are certain passages of Scripture selected for repetition : these are called “Golden Texts.” The texts illustrated in this series of papers are those appointed for repetition on Sunday morning. The papers are not written with the intention of furnishing teachers with materials which they can use in their classes without trouble ; but to assist their own meditation on the texts which they have to explain to the children. Parents, too, may with advantage have their thoughts occupied with the passages of Scripture which their boys and girls are repeating at school.

St. Paul's words. If he had said that the various events in the life of the Jewish people had "happened unto them for ensamples" unto us, he could only have said what was true of every nation, and, indeed, of every individual life. They are all "ensamples"—sometimes very terrible examples—to those that come after them. But St. Paul says far more than this. He sees in the Jewish history, in the spiritual blessings and privileges of the nation, in their temptations and their falls, in the righteous though severe punishment their sins brought down upon them, not only "ensamples," but "types" of the vaster spiritual facts of the last dispensation constituted by Christ, and under which we live. The correspondence between the Old Covenant and the New was not accidental nor arbitrary: it was divinely ordained, as the result of the deep spiritual relation between the two: the Old Testament prefiguring the New, just as the rough and imperfect outlines of the artist's first study suggests and prefigures the finished and perfect painting.

If once we grasp this truth, it will prove very fruitful in its application.

First of all, it will add incalculably to the intellectual interest we take in reading the Old Testament. It is to be feared that there are many Christians who hardly ever read the Old Testament—if we except the Psalms and the evangelical parts of the prophecies of Isaiah—because, they say, they find it dry and uninteresting. But if, instead of regarding the history of the Jews as a record of events that happened ages ago, and with which they have no concern, they were to look upon it as a part of the unfolding of God's great plan for the redemption of the world, as full of meaning that reaches down to our own times, because it was, as has been well said, "the preparation of the Gospel for man, just as heathenism was the preparation of man for the Gospel;" if they were to grasp the full significance of St. Paul's words that "all these things happened" unto the Jews "with a typical purpose," then a new interest would at once gather about the history of God's ancient people. They would delight to trace the faint outlines of the Gospel slowly appearing in the imperfect shadows of the law.

Then, again, this principle that St. Paul here lays down would guard us against an opposite error in the treatment of the Old Testament into which another class of Christians are very apt to fall. They treat the Old Testament as if it were God's final and perfect revelation of Himself, instead of being an intentionally incomplete and typical "shadow of good things to come." If they want the Gospel, they go to Leviticus rather than to the Epistle to the Romans for it; and they find more spiritual profit in an ingenious and imaginative spiritualising of the dresses of the priests or of the vessels of the sanctuary, than in the Sermon on the Mount or the Epistle of St. James.

Now this mistake, often very disastrous, both in its intellectual and moral results, arises from forgetfulness of the true meaning and purpose of the Old Testament. Though it was "a shadow of good things to come," it was only a shadow; and if we would have the "substance of the things," whose outline only appeared in the Law, and which the saints of those days "hoped for," we must turn, not to Exodus or Leviticus, but to the revelation God has given "in the end of the ages" by His Son and through the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. A type can never be as full of meaning as that which it typifies, and, to a Christian, the Gospels and the Epistles of the New Testament ought to be fuller of instruction and interest than any books contained in the Law.

And, lastly, the principle of our "Golden Text" will suggest to us how much practical "admonition" we may gain for ourselves from a devout and intelligent study of the history of the Jews. They were the people of God, "chosen to be a peculiar people unto Himself above all the nations that are upon the earth," entrusted with a special revelation, and enriched with special privileges, and yet they fell, and were finally rejected by God. How much graver is our responsibility, to whom "God hath in these last days spoken by His Son," and how much darker will be our sin, and sorer our punishment, if, unwarned by Israel's sin and Israel's fate, we "fall after the same examples of unbelief."

No wonder St. Paul closes this long reference to the typical history of Israel with the words, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall."

DECEMBER 9.—"*Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*"—Hebrews iv. 11.

These words are another illustration of the truth to which we were referring in our remarks on the last "Golden Text," that the whole history of the Jewish Church was one long prophecy and type of the history of the Christian Church in every age. The writer has been speaking in the third chapter of the unbelief of the Jews and of the punishment it brought down upon them of exclusion from the promised land—a land that, in contrast with the weary wanderings of forty years in the desert might well be called the "rest of God,"—"My rest" (iii. 11, 18); and from this he turns at once to the higher and nobler "rest" of which the earthly Canaan was prophetic, and warns us that our unbelief will surely shut us out from that rest: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (chap. iv. 1). And then he goes on to show how this rest for the Christian was really the underlying thought, even in the Old Jewish

Scriptures, when they seemed to be speaking of the earthly and temporal rest, and that it was a Divine and eternal rest, "a sabbatism," as the writer calls it in the ninth verse, and he urges us to "labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

Taking these words, therefore, as suggesting to us some thoughts concerning the heavenly rest, we see, first of all, how completely the revelation that the Gospel brings to man meets all his deepest needs. It holds out to him, weary with bearing the burdens and conflict of life, the hope of an eternal rest. In the fulness of "the bounding energies of youth," when all our powers are in their early vigour, and life is just opening before us with its unknown possibilities of desire and attainment, we should probably pass by the promises of "rest" as a thing we cared little for, and that would hardly be a boon were it to be given to us. Labour exertion, aspiration, conflict, unrest—these are the ideals of youth. But how differently we feel as the years go by! At fifty we begin to prize the few hours of quiet we can snatch from the whirl and din of life, and a new blessedness and sanctity invest the peace of home, and we are already looking forward to the time when we shall "retire" from business, and leave to our sons the cares and responsibilities we have borne so long; whilst at seventy, when "the grasshopper is a burden and desire fails," we welcome the thought of perfect rest, as the traveller, after his weary journey, welcomes the sight of home. As Mr. Greg, in his singularly touching and tender paper—all the more touching from its yearning for the calm, clear, strong confidence of the Christian hope—in a recent number of the *Nineteenth Century* says: "It may be the fatigue which comes with age—fatigue of the fancy as well as of the frame; but, somehow, what we yearn for most instinctively at last is rest, and the peace which we can imagine the easiest because we know it best, is that of sleep."

And yet, if in imagination we could project ourselves into a state where this longing would be realised, and where we should enjoy perfect rest, we should at once begin to be dissatisfied. After a time we should have had enough of rest. The old longing for fresh endeavours and new attainments would return upon us with redoubled force, and the very rest we had enjoyed would stimulate us to begin to act again. We should yearn for a "renewal of our youth," for its energies to be restored, that once more we might taste the excitement of the strife of achievement, of endless endeavour.

Now the revelation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ answers these, as it answers all the truest and deepest yearnings of our nature. It promises to us "rest," unbroken, eternal rest, and yet a rest which is compatible with the noblest and highest activity of all the powers we possess.

It holds out to us the hope of one day exchanging this frail and perishable body for a body which shall be "raised in glory" and "in power," with capacities of exertion and endurance, unimaginable here; and it declares that the spiritual part of man, his soul, for ever freed from its limitations of knowledge, from its ignorance, and, above all, from its sin, shall be raised to such unknown heights of intellectual and spiritual elevation, that they can only be described as a life in God. Now this may all be a dream, but if a dream, it is one that ought to come true, for it satisfies all the profoundest and noblest longings of which man is conscious here. To have all that "rest" means, the peace, the repose, the complete absence of all sense of strain, or fatigue, or pain, and yet at the same time to feel that all the powers of our nature are being exerted to their full capacity of energy in achievement and service for the highest ends, in one word, to be possessors of "eternal life"—this is a heaven and an immortality which alone fully satisfies man. And this is the future the Gospel has revealed. True, it has sometimes been pitifully and sadly degraded in our representations of the future life; it has been carnalised into a heaven of sensuous ease and selfish enjoyment, without one attractive feature for the higher and more spiritual portion of nature; but the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not responsible for our perversions of its revelation. Let any man turn away from the heaven of too many of our popular hymns, and popular sermons, and religious books, to the heaven revealed by Jesus Christ and in the writings of His Apostles, and then say whether that is not a revelation worthy of God and worthy of man.

And yet—and this is a unique characteristic of the future life as we find it revealed in the New Testament—its possession is always made to depend on what we are here. It is not a state into which all men enter at death, whatever their character and life have been; but it is a state into which only those enter who have been "made meet" for it on earth. Life in God on this side of the grave is the inexorable condition of Life in God on the other. Not more certainly is the sensual and besotted drunkard incapable of entering into the pure enjoyment and delight of art, or of science, or of any of the pleasures of intellectual research, than is the ungodly hopelessly disqualified from entering into that "rest" of which we have spoken. It "remaineth for the people of God."

The practical lesson for all is very simple. Faith is the necessary condition of the spiritual life. It must be, for that life is "hid with Christ in God," and we can only live it as we live "by faith, not by sight." And hence the solemn warning, coming to us from the dread exclusion of Israel from the land of promise through its unbelief—"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

DECEMBER 16.—“*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms : and He shall thrust out the enemy from before Thee ; and shall say, Destroy them.*”—Deut. xxxiii. 27.

It is not a little significant that the last words of Moses, the lawgiver of the old covenant, should have been words of blessing (v. 1). The man whom we associate with the tremendous judgment that fell on Egypt, and with the awful majesty of Sinai, and whose very name has become almost synonymous with the terrors of the law, here closes his life by blessing Israel. Moses' first public act was slaying the Egyptian ; his last, as he stood on the borders of the eternal world, and when, if ever, the true meaning and end of all God's dealings with Israel would be most clear to him, was the pronouncing a solemn and formal blessing on the people he had loved and served so well—a blessing that, at the end of such a life as his, came like the benediction after prayer. It is only one out of many proofs of which the Old Testament is full, that just as we have a law in the Gospel, so to the ancient people of God there was a Gospel in the law. The lawgiver dies with words of mercy on his lips.

And how infinitely precious would such a promise as that contained in our “Golden Text,” and which is the sum of all the blessings that had gone before, be to Israel at this time. They had been wandering, homeless and houseless, in the desert for forty long years ; now they hear the “Eternal God” is to be “their dwelling place.”* They had often been tempted to doubt whether God was really with them or not, and to give way to doubts and fears : now they are assured that though God is in heaven, He is also with them on earth, and stoops to lay “underneath them the everlasting arms,” bearing them and their cares too. They were looking forward to the promised land, but its possession was to be gained only after a terrible conflict with, and overthrow of, their enemies, and now they are taught this same God shall fight their battles for them : “He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them.” And so Israel found every blessing it most needed contained in this single promise : an abiding and unchanging dwelling-place where “no evil” could ever “befall” them ; an “everlasting arm” to sustain and support them, strong enough to bear every burden and every care ; and a Divine Presence pledged to go before them, whom no foe could affright, but who would beat down all their enemies beneath their feet.

Read in this way, the words of our text are as full of meaning and

* Such is the true meaning of the Hebrew word rendered “refuge” in our version. It is the same word used in Psalm xc, 1, itself “a prayer of Moses, the man of God.”

comfort for us as they were for the Jews, and we may try and learn some of the lessons they ought to teach us.

The key to the whole promise is in the opening words, "The eternal God is thy dwelling-place." Let us endeavour to understand what this means.

There is a sense, it hardly need be said, in which God is the "dwelling-place" of every human soul. "In Him," says St. Paul, and he is speaking of mankind generally, "we live and move and have our being." To use a very imperfect illustration, but the only one that gives even a feeble conception of the truth, just as the atmospheric air encompasses the earth, the breath of all life, within us quite as much as without us, itself unseen though everywhere making its presence felt, so the "Eternal God" is Himself the One Infinite and Invisible Life in which "all things subsist." The creature lives only as it lives in God.

But, in a far higher sense than this, the people of God "dwell" in Him. They are not only sustained, in common with all living things, by His life, but they actually and consciously share it; through their union with the Lord Jesus Christ they have "become partakers of a Divine nature," and their life, to use St. Paul's words, "is hid with Christ in God."

Now, if this be true, some very grave consequences follow. Many Christians are accustomed to go to God as their strength in times of weakness, or to flee to Him as a "very present help in trouble;" but they forget that God has just as much to do with their life when they are strong and glad, as He has when they are troubled and heavy-laden. When the clouds gather, and the sunshine of life is darkened, and the storm breaks upon them, they turn to Him to protect them; but when the storm has passed by, and all is bright and fair again, they leave Him, as if now they could walk alone. They make God their "refuge;" they forget He is "their dwelling-place." They are thankful for Him as a "hiding-place" for a little while; they do not remember He is more than this, He is their *home*. But if they were continually mindful of this fact, how completely it would alter their lives! To think there is not one thing in my daily life that I have to do alone, not one trouble that comes to me that I have to bear alone, not one joy I have to share alone, not one purpose I may make alone, not one sin I am to fight alone; to know that the least event in my history, quite as much as the greatest, does not happen to me alone, but that God shares my life with me, and that at every moment I am dwelling in Him; to realise this would be almost a revolution, although a most blessed one, in many lives. How many things would be left undone that are now done, how many troubles that crush us now would seem easy to be borne; what a new sanctity and sweetness would fill our joys; what deeper responsibility would invest all our plans and purposes for the future; what

victories we should gain over sin where hitherto there have been only defeats; what greatness and sacredness of meaning would attach itself to the common things of our daily life, if once we felt the truth of these words, "The Eternal God is thy dwelling-place."

Of course everything else that Moses declared was contained in this blessed fact we should find true. We should never be crushed with the care or the burdens of life. How could we, when we were not bearing them by ourselves, but "underneath were the everlasting arms"? We should never be afraid of meeting any foe, and never despair of victory in the most desperate fight. How could we when we knew that "greater was He that was with us than all they that were against us," and were trusting in Him to "thrust out the enemy from before us, and to say, Destroy them"? Very few of us can tell what our lives might become if once we realised all the meaning of the words, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."

DECEMBER 23.—"*For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*"—Romans xiv. 8.

These great words—great alike in their spiritual elevation and in the infinite variety of application of which they are capable—seem to have been suggested to the mind of the Apostle by a comparatively trivial thing. In the Church at Rome there were some brethren, apparently Christian Jews, who had brought with them into the Church many of their Jewish prejudices and scruples. They were afraid of pollution from eating meats sacrificed to idols, and they abstained therefore from all kinds of animal food, "eating herbs" alone. They were also very scrupulous in observing certain days, notably the Sabbath, or seventh day, as more sacred than others; and they seem generally to have looked upon Christianity as something over and above their old Jewish faith and in addition to it, rather than as a new principle of life that superseded the old law altogether. They were "weak in the faith." But all were not so. There were some, possibly the Gentile members of the Church, who had no such conscientious scruples. They believed that "an idol was nothing in the world," and could therefore eat freely, even animal food that had been offered in sacrifice to idols. They had never been trained in the Jewish observance of sacred days, and so they "esteemed every day alike;" to them the Sabbath was neither more nor less sacred than any other day. They were "strong" brethren, perhaps a little inclined to go as far in one extreme as their weaker brethren went in the other. And herein was their danger. Although the freedom with which they eat all kinds of meats, and observed all

days equally, was no sin to them, yet it was becoming an occasion of sin to their Jewish brethren. It was hurting their conscience, and "putting a stumbling block" in their way. And the Church was in danger of being divided into two parties: the "strong" insisting on the "liberty wherewith Christ had made them free," and despising those who were unable to see with them, and were in bondage to Jewish tradition and prejudice; and the "weak," so "grieved" with the conduct of their stronger brethren as to question their loyalty to Christ. Nor was this the only danger that beset the Church. Some of the weaker brethren, still retaining their Jewish scrupulousness of conscience, might be led by the example of others to partake of food, although they thought it unclean, and so to bring trouble and guilt upon their own consciences.

This was the state of things in the Roman Church with which St. Paul deals in this chapter and part of the next; and nothing shows the greatness of St. Paul more than the way in which he treats this difficulty. His personal sympathies were all with the "strong;" he knew, as well as they, that no real uncleanness attached to any kind of meats or drinks, and that there was no special sanctity in any one day above another, and yet what does he say?

First of all, he refuses to either side the right to judge the other: Christ alone was the judge, and to Him each man "standeth or falleth." Next, he asks both the strong and the weak to give each other full credit for perfect conscientiousness and loyalty to Christ in their opposite modes of action. "He that regardeth the day," he says, "regardeth it unto the Lord, and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he regardeth it not. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." And then bringing—as was St. Paul's habit—the very highest spiritual truths to bear on the commonest duties of every-day life, he reminds them of the one supreme principle that should govern the life of every servant of Christ, the consciousness that they did not belong to themselves, but to the Lord Jesus Christ: "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." From this great fact of the Christian life, the Apostle goes on to deduce the practical inference that the "strong" ought to deny themselves anything rather than injure a brother who belonged, not to them, but to Christ. If they recognised the truth that they belonged to the Lord, all such practical difficulties and disputes as were now troubling them would settle themselves, for the supreme aim of each one would then be not to "please himself," but to please Christ.

This, then, is the true idea of the Christian life. It is Christ's, so absolutely Christ's, that, as our text says, not only the life, but even the

death of the Christian becomes a moral act;—he “dies unto the Lord;” whether in life or in death “we are the Lord’s.”

Now it must be remembered that this fact does not depend on our recognition of it. If I have been redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ, I am His, whether I am conscious of it or not. It is true, I may live unmindful of the fact; I may deal with my time or my money or my talents as if they were my own, given me to use as I liked; but Christ will none the less demand of me, as His servant, an “account of my stewardship.” As St. Paul says in this chapter—and it is one of the practical results he deduces from the fact of Christ’s ownership of us—“So, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

And there is no exception made, no reservation allowed of a part of our life for ourselves, provided the rest be given to Christ. For example, if I am engaged in business, my business belongs just as much to Christ as my service does on Sunday. I am to conduct my business, remembering I am conducting it for Him, and that He is to be consulted about everything: my buying, selling, speculations of all kinds, advertisements, the plans I may form for the future—all are to be laid before Him for His approval before I take a single step myself. Or, again, to take another illustration of the same truth: I am Christ’s property, therefore my amusements belong to Him quite as much as any other part of my life. Christian people are very often perplexed to know what amusements are right and what are wrong; young men and women, especially, often ask, Is it right to go to a theatre, or a ball, or to play at cards, or at billiards, and so on. But if they are Christ’s it is for Him to decide these questions, not for them, nor for their friends nor their ministers, and if they would only honestly ask Him, He would settle all such difficulties very quickly. If He sanctioned an amusement, it would not matter if all the world thought it was wrong; if He forbade it, then it would not matter though everyone else thought it innocent and right. Least of all, should we ever be guided in our choice of pleasure by what pleased ourselves; we should always remember, that “if we live, we live unto the Lord,” and therefore to please Him.

These illustrations will be sufficient to suggest some of the endless varieties of application of the principle of this “Golden Text,” that the Christian, either in life or in death, is Christ’s property, and bound, therefore, both to live and to die “unto the Lord.” It will be well, however, in teaching the young this great truth, to make them understand the foundation upon which it rests. We belong to Christ because Christ has created us, and, above all, redeemed us for Himself. The words that follow the text contain the ground of Christ’s claim on us: “For this end Christ both died and lived again, that He might be

Lord both of the dead and the living." But perhaps the most striking and emphatic declaration of this truth is that found in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. vi. 19, 20, where St. Paul says: "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." To those who had seen men and women bought and sold in the slave market of Corinth, these words would have an energy and vividness of meaning they cannot have to us; they would understand the Apostle to mean that just as a slave became wholly the property of his master as soon as the money had been paid down for his purchase, and no longer possessed any personal rights or property of his own, so they had become the absolute property of the Lord Jesus, having been paid for and "bought" by Him. And this, after all, is at once the highest obligation and the highest honour of the Christian, that he is a "slave of Jesus Christ." Such a slavery is man's noblest liberty; as has been said, "He gives himself to Christ as a man, to receive himself back as a saint;" and for its reward it has this promise of the Master Himself: "Where I am, there also shall my servant be."

DECEMBER 30.—"*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.*"—Psalm ciii. 2.

There is a sense in which we can forget nothing. No fact seems more certainly established by modern biological science, than that each event as it has happened to us in the past has left its own record behind, a permanent memorial of itself graven into the very substance of the brain. The path of life we have trodden has not been like the path of a ship crossing the sea, the marks of which are obliterated as soon as they are made, but it is rather like the path of a traveller over a field of newly-fallen snow, on which every footstep has left its print. So our past, each step of the way, the thoughts and words and deeds which have made up our life, the mercies and the sins, have all left their own separate footprints behind, and memory is only the soul turning for a little while to gaze on the footmarks we have thus left behind us. In this sense we can forget nothing. The way is always there. But the light may have faded from the path and it be hidden in darkness, or we may be so occupied with pressing on the path that lies before us as to have no leisure to turn and ponder the past, and in this sense we may forget it. And it is one of the sad perversities of our human nature that we forget most quickly the things we ought to remember, and remember longest the things we ought to forget. How easily, for instance, we have forgotten the special mercies we have received from God, and how readily we can recall the ills we may have suffered. Let anyone look back on the year that is now almost gone, and he will find that the things which rise up prominently in the past

are not the ceaseless mercies God has shown to him, mercies which have come with the regularity and gentleness of the morning light, "blessings unasked, unsought," that have entered his door; but the disappointments, the sufferings, the injuries, it may be, he has endured. One week's illness in 1877 is far fresher in our memory than fifty-one weeks of unbroken health. We do not "write our injuries in the sand, and our kindnesses on the marble;" we write our mercies on the sand, and to-morrow's tide obliterates the record, whilst too often we grave our misfortunes, as with a pen of iron, on the rock.

Now one result of this melancholy perversity of memory in remembering what it ought to forget, and in forgetting what it ought to remember, is seen in the prevalence of the sin of ingratitude to God. We lose all recollection of the mercies of God almost as soon as they have been enjoyed, and our gratitude is as short-lived as our memory. We do not "bless the Lord," simply because we forget all His benefits.

And yet, common as this sin of ingratitude unhappily is, there is no sin we more unsparingly condemn *in other people* than the want of a grateful spirit, or more indignantly resent when the ingratitude happens to be shown to ourselves. Even when we confer a kindness upon a friend who is an equal in social position, we look for some recognition of our kindness as a matter of course, and the warmth of our friendship undergoes a sensible chill if we fail to find it. Still more keenly do we resent ingratitude when the favour is conferred on an inferior who has no special claims on us, but who nevertheless receives our kindnesses with complete indifference, as if he were entitled to them. We are apt to express our astonishment at such conduct in strong language, and to resolve, inwardly at any rate, we will attempt no more kindnesses in that direction. But if we would see indignation or ingratitude at white heat, we must look for it when it witnesses the ingratitude of our enemy. If at the cost of considerable moral effort we have succeeded in quenching our natural hatred of someone who has deliberately injured us; if, instead of returning evil for evil, we have done him an act of real and undeserved kindness, and if, in spite of everything, he receives a kindness with supercilious indifference, manifesting neither gratitude nor appreciation of what we had done, then our disgust and indignation know no bounds. Such ingratitude is not a fault—it is a crime. It is worse than brutal, for even the dogs lick the hand that fondles them—it is devilish. It warrants the conclusion, so we say, that neither heart nor conscience is left in such a man; both are turned to stone.

All possibly true, but how seldom we pause to think that in thus condemning another we may be really condemning ourselves. The mercies God has shown to us have been mercies bestowed not on an

equal, not simply on a creature infinitely inferior to Him, but on those who once at least were "enemies by reason of wicked works." The very first "benefit" the Psalmist reminds himself he has received is this, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;" and it is this fact, that all through the year God has been ceaselessly blessing us who have as ceaselessly been sinning against Him that makes His mercy and our ingratitude so wonderful. If we take this one thought with us in our review of the year, and remember, not only "all God's benefits," but how sadly unworthy of them all we have been, perhaps we shall begin to "bless" Him for them as we have never yet done.

Only let us remember there will be no gratitude so long as we look only at our own unworthiness. The old story of the statue of Memnon in the desert may teach us a lesson. All through the hours of the night it sat there motionless and dumb, but as soon as the light of the rising sun smote upon it, and it felt the warmth of his rays, its stony lips began to move and it broke into music. Just so our lips and our heart are dumb whilst the darkness of our own sin surrounds us, but the moment the light of God's great love falls upon them, they begin to utter His praise. The Hebrew words for praise and for light are very nearly connected. We sing "Hallelujah" only as the bright shining of the mercy of God breaks upon us.

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DAVID COX.

NO. II.

IN our last number we sketched the incidents of David Cox's life—quiet, even uneventful, affording but little matter for the use of the biographer; yet, on the whole, a cheerful, healthy, happy life—free from dark shadows as from brilliant light; noble in the highest sense, as a life of duty clearly seen and continuously performed; useful and valuable in an incalculable degree, as opening a world of beauty and a vast region of instruction and enjoyment to those who, without the aid of the interpreter, might have failed to enter upon either. In the sketch, as it has proceeded, some idea of the man himself has been obtained; but it is desirable to make this fuller and clearer. As to his personality, no better study of it can be found than in the admirable portrait by Sir Watson Gordon. Here we see Cox as he was in his later years—worn a little, but still sturdy, solid, grave with the strength of years and experience; a whole world of keen observation, of knowledge, and of wisdom in his peculiar direction, indicated by the steady, thoughtful gaze of the honest grey eyes, looking out at us from beneath their shaggy eye-brows. It is a face and head not unlike that of Sir Walter Scott.

The character of the man is revealed in the portrait—in the easy, unaffected attitude; the quiet, simple dress; the careless tie of the neck-cloth, the old-fashioned collar just peeping over it; the hair pushed back carelessly from the temples. Altogether we have a man obviously regardless of mere appearances; simple, modest, shrewd, kindly, with humour in the eyes and in the lines of the mouth, a little rugged perhaps, but far removed from roughness—a figure not inaptly expressed by the name which Turner gave him,—“Old Farmer Cox.” Such as the portrait is, so was the man himself. Take his dress as helping to express character:

“There was nothing,” Mr. Hall writes, “about him that might be called showy in person, manner, or surroundings. In person he was a fair-sized man, ruddy, strong, and active. In his ways he was as artless and simple as a child. In person he was ever scrupulously clean and neat; in dress plain and unpretending. When sketching he wore a grey suit, with a cap of the same kind; when at home his dress was much the same, excepting that on going out to make calls or to dine with a friend, he put on a black frock coat, black velvet waistcoat (changed in the summer for a light and thinner one), and grey trousers,—the dress, in fact, painted in his portrait; and he invariably wore shoes.”

In his house, as in his dress, the same simplicity was observed. The only articles of luxury and ornament in the way of furniture were a carved oak sideboard and a sofa, but there was no easy-chair in the place—to the day of his death, indeed, he insisted upon having only cane-seated chairs, like those used in bed-rooms. Not a bit of *bric-a-brac* was to be found in living-room or in studio at the quiet little Harborne house; no plate or armour, no handsome curtains or mirrors, no rich carpets—nothing, indeed, that could minister to luxury, or contribute, in a mechanical way, to the formation of what some painters are pleased to call an atmosphere of Art. Cox disliked such things, and resented any proposal that he should use them. An adventurous person, a dealer in curiosities—so Mr. Hall tells us—tried to tempt him by an offer to lend him for life a set of carved oak chairs with velvet cushions. “They would be quite in character in an artist’s room,” so said the dealer. “You would find them extremely comfortable, and I would charge you nothing for the use of them. You should keep them as long as you live. I suppose that after your death there will be a sale here, and then my chairs will realise three times their value for having belonged to such an eminent artist.” This climax was too much for Cox. He declined the proposal in a manner which, if it did not succeed in abashing his delicate-minded visitor, at least prevented any further proposals to utilise himself for the purpose of giving “effect” to a furniture sale. Not only was Cox’s sitting-room plainly furnished, but

it had few ornaments—some of his own pictures, partly finished ; his portrait by Gordon ; and a masterly sketch by William Müller, for which Cox gave a picture of his own, “The Vale of Clwyd,” sold since his death for two thousand guineas ; valued in his life-time at perhaps fifty pounds ! His painting-room was even plainer than the sitting-room. Originally it was a servant’s bed-room, with a window at the side, to which a sky-light was added. The easel was planted near the end of the room ; the tables were strewn with brushes and colours ; folios of drawings, finished or in progress, rested against the walls—most of them left unsold until after the artist’s death, when they brought a fortune to his son ; a cupboard on one side of the room was stacked full of unsold drawings. It was a work-place, nothing else ; bare of everything but the materials and the products of Art. In his mode of living Cox was just as simple as in his surroundings. He drank very little, ate of the plainest dishes, preferring boiled milk and home-baked bread for supper, the bread made by his faithful old servant, Ann Fowler, who came to him at Hereford as a girl, and lived to see him close his eyes at Harborne, and whom he provided for by his will. He smoked,—*that* should be noted, but not very much, a half cigar being his favourite method of enjoying tobacco. In all things, indeed, Cox was a strictly temperate man, and one who exercised great control over himself. Now and then, indeed, he would say a sharp thing, but his anger, such as it was, soon died away ; and his habit was towards cheerfulness and quiet mirthfulness, with now and then touches of deeper humour. To his immediate friends he was strongly and constantly attached. “A letter from you,” he wrote once to Mr. Roberts, his oldest and closest friend, “is essential to my comfort ;” and this was the general bent of his feeling. He liked to receive visits from friends ; to hear the news of persons and places they had seen together ; to recall old sketching excursions ; to chat about Art. To young painters, when he met them on his favourite Welsh ground, he was invariably kind and helpful. Whatever he knew he was ready to tell them ; he made no mystery of his methods or materials, he had no tricks of the craft to hide, and if he had, he had not craft enough to conceal them. Sometimes, if a young man got into a difficulty, Cox would help him by encouragement, by sound advice, by actual work upon the canvas. Sometimes, and not unfrequently, he gave sketches of his own where he thought they might be useful ; he ventured occasionally to offer even pecuniary assistance ; indeed, in all respects in the society of artists, he made Art a true bond of brotherhood. In his domestic relations, Cox was tender and thoughtful, kind to servants, affectionate towards those nearly related to him. He never, for example, left home even for a walk into town without taking leave of his wife, and the letters written

to his friends are marked invariably by sincere feeling, simply but forcibly expressed. Courtesy was a marked feature in his character, unwillingness to speak or think ill of others; purity was another feature, no doubtful jest or unseemly word escaped his lips, a child or a woman might have heard all he had to say. This innate modesty sprang up from a deeply religious feeling; he was no theologian, it is true, and cared little or nothing for the wranglings over creeds; but he was unaffectedly pious and reverent in mind, and strict] in his religious observances. When at Harborne he went regularly to the parish church; when away on sketching excursions, he always attended the nearest English church. If, as sometimes happened at Bettws, there was no English service, he would go to Llanwrst, four miles off, and would contrive, if possible to take some fellow artist with him. For the Sunday he had a particular reverence; he never painted on that day, but spent it in worship, in quiet reading of the Bible, in pleasant converse with any friends who happened to call upon him. Levity in others on religious affairs was displeasing to him; his presence banished looseness and coarse frivolity from the friendly circle. Once at Bettws he gave a sharp rebuke in a practical way to some young artists. On the wall of the churchyard they had (cleverly enough) drawn ridiculous caricatures of the village parson and his clerk, to the discomposure of the grave Welsh folk. Cox was much annoyed by this. "What will they think of *us*?" he asked; but he did not confine himself to speech. Accompanied by a volunteer companion, he sallied out at nightfall, armed with a brush and a pail of water, and effaced the obnoxious drawings, which it is needless to say were not repeated. Cox had another characteristic worth mention: he was a keen politician, a Liberal of a decided type. When at Hereford he was a great admirer of Cobbett, and he made one of a committee to give a public reception to Joseph Hume. To the last the *Examiner*, rendered attractive by Albany Fonblanque's vigorous writing, was his favourite newspaper—a sign of no bad taste in literature; but it must be added that for literature in an extended sense Cox had no aptitude; he was no bookworm, though he could write well and clearly on occasion, as may be seen from the text of his drawing-book, the directions given in which no student could misunderstand, while amateurs and advanced artists have much to learn from them. Sometimes Cox (all traits must be noted to complete his character) was reproached with a want of liberality in money matters. The charge cannot fairly be sustained. He was careful, no doubt; he had struggled so hard, and his gains had been so modest, that he might well be so. But he gave away both money and drawings, the latter sometimes with profusion; he asked moderate prices, he never pressed the sale of his works, and he had in him no trace of the mere money-hunter. No speculation tempted

him, no expedient to make his money breed had any fascination for him; so much as he could get went quietly into the Three per Cents., and stopped there, safe and at low interest. It was not much after all, as people now reckon money. When he died, in his seventy-seventh year, after a life of unceasing industry, and after having been before the public for more than fifty years as an exhibiting artist, Cox left about £12,000, the savings of a life-time. An artist of his rank would now make more than half the money in a single year. Two or three of his own oil pictures and half-a-dozen of his drawings would sell, now that he is dead, for the whole amount he saved in the course of his life. But in his day Cox had none of the great chances. He never received more than a hundred pounds for any picture. For one of his paintings, which realised 2,000 guineas, Cox had £40—less than half the odd shillings produced by the sale!

It is strange, indeed, to look back at his prices at different stages. In 1818, when he was twenty-five, he sold six Indian-ink drawings to Mr. Everitt at 7s. each, and six more at 4s. each. Coloured drawings, at the same time were sold to a London dealer—twenty-one of them, for eight guineas, that is 8s. each! In 1830, in his fiftieth year, there is an entry in his account book: "July 5, 1830. Five water-colour drawings—Calais Pier; View in Ghent; Boat on the Scheldt, near Dort; Minehead, and Landscape [in Wales—prices for the five, £12." Three years later, his exhibition prices, for fair-sized drawings, were five or six guineas, and the works were often unsold at those rates. As late as 1844, he sells to Mr. Birch, a large oil picture of Carnarvon Bay for £19; and a fine drawing, "The Stubble Field," a well-known work, for £25. In 1849, only a few years before his death, he mentions exultingly in a note to Mr. Roberts, that at Mr. Butler's sale, "There were five pictures of mine; they fetched more than the price they cost him, even with the frames." As late as 1853, he writes again: "Several of my small pictures, nine inches by fourteen inches, which I have sold for £5, have been sold for £15, and others at the same proportion; other pictures which I received £40 each for sold for £75. I have given notice to one or two friends that I would not take any more commissions at the price I have hitherto had." In the same year, he writes with sadness, and with a touch of justifiable warmth: "I am now confined to my bedroom—a most violent attack of bronchitis, which nearly suffocates me at times. If I should be spared, I will get rid of some commissions, and make no more promises, but merely go out when I please, and paint what I please. It is of no use my working for some; they are rather too selfish, and hurry me to paint faster than it is possible. Perhaps they are aware that if I should die they will not be able to procure any more. Some who have not set that value upon my

small bits have parted with them at an advance of two hundred per cent., and in some cases more." Another quotation from his letters, and it may be the last as regards his prices—he is speaking of the Water Colour Society's Exhibition in 1853: "I hope to be in London on the 3rd of May, and then I will take out of the price-book the sums I have asked for my four large drawings; and if there are those of the public who appreciate mind before mechanism, they will write to me to learn how I estimate them. *I may be wrong, but the world has yet to be taught.* Perhaps I may be made vain by some here (this was written from Harborne), who think my 'Summit of a Mountain' worth—I am almost afraid to say—£100; and if I could paint it in oil, I shall some day (D.V.) get that sum." The world, indeed, had to be taught: Cox was not wrong in that. Those who care to trace the progress of the lesson may do so in the catalogues of sales of Cox's drawings at the end of Mr. Solly's life of the artist. Looking back at the prices named by the painter in his lifetime, it is no wonder that he amassed so little money, or that he was careful of what he was able to obtain. One thing is to be said for David Cox, and said to his honour. Throughout life he was independent; his living was wrought with his own hands and brains; he never begged or borrowed, no man was the poorer for him, but many the richer; and not once does he break out into complaint that to him Art was not the bringer of wealth. To his honest, simple nature, it was enough to earn his daily bread, to provide modestly for those dependent upon him, to put by something for old age, if need be; and to find his great reward in the love and enjoyment of Art for the sake of its purity and beauty, its consolations and pleasures, its elevating and ennobling influences.

It was not until after his death that the world began to appreciate David Cox in his full greatness, and to recognise his place in Art. A few discerning critics and a little band of attached friends understood him perfectly in his lifetime; but the bulk of people who profess to care for Art have discovered only of late years that as a master of English landscape he stands unapproached, save by Turner, and that in some respects he surpasses Turner himself. The range of his art is wonderful, alike as to period, to subject, and to manner. For over fifty years he was a painter, skilled in resource, unrivalled in industry. There was nothing that he did not include within his range: landscape, figures, buildings, animals, fish, fruit, still life, flowers; the commonest aspects of nature, her subtlest gradations, her sublimest effects, all found perfect expression by means of his facile and powerful brush. His manner was as various as his range of subject. His early style was dry, hard, and somewhat formal, but marked by indications of power and freedom that were afterwards to ripen into maturity. In his second

manner, or middle period, he exhibited perfect command over material, elaborate finish, most careful and refined drawing, exquisitely tender, and even brilliant colour. In his later manner he is fuller of colour, broad in treatment, grand and striking in effect and expression. Some of the drawings of this period, especially those executed on rough paper, of which, in his later years, he was very fond, have been disparaged as coarse, dauby, and blotty; or, as one critic described them, chiefly fluff and splash. But those who study them with care, and get to understand the painter's intention, cannot fail to recognise their wonderful power, and to see in these generalised views of nature the work of a perfectly trained hand, and a mind full of resource; the work, indeed, of one who was bent upon plucking out the heart of the great mystery. Cox was no imitator, no learner from other painters, no follower of a school. Whatever he did had his own individuality stamped full and clear upon it. You pick him out at once, let whoever may be placed in competition with him. Even in his merest indications of a subject there is an obvious completeness which few painters attain; his work is thoroughly studied; before he begins he knows what he intends to do; he does it, leaving nothing to chance, or to the help of happy accident or undesigned effect. Thus his pictures are truthful in the highest sense, and especially in those of his later years, they have the great quality of suggestiveness, the result of the painter's own powerful imagination, aided by his mastery over execution, and his long familiarity with the phases of nature. As Cox himself says, he strives to exhibit the superiority of mind over mechanism. Yet, though conscious of this aim, he was uniformly modest, and inclined to depreciate his own powers. To the last he fancied that there were secrets known to oil painters which he could never discover. When in London he thought so little of his powers that he used to destroy many of his drawings, and put the fragments down a sewer grating, in a particular spot, which he once showed to a friend, saying that many of his works had gone down there, floating off to the Thames. Even in the height of his power, he would sometimes destroy a morning's work at Bettws—tearing up the paper, or painting out on the canvas. He had no trace of conceit or self-satisfaction. Though valuing honest praise, from those who could judge his work, he never allowed the good opinion of his friends to lead him into exaggerated self-appreciation. Simple, as we have seen, in his character, tastes, habits, appearance, and mode of life, he was simple also in the materials he used, always choosing the fewest colours, and those which were tried and proved for endurance; and he was simple, likewise, in the directness of his purpose, and consequently in the effect of his work. Thus arises one of his greatest charms, the homeliness, and so to speak, the friendliness, of

his pictures. Even the grandest of them have this quality. We see in them what he wished us to see ; and we see also something of the character of the man himself. In his company we forget the studio, and go straight out of doors, on the moor, in the pleasant lanes and fields, among the trees, by the river-side, on the mountain crag ; we stand in the full warm sunlight, or breast the storm, or shrink from the dull chillness of "the level waste, the rounding grey." Throughout the whole series of Cox's works there is the same feeling ; it is nature, strongly tinged with his own individuality, that he presents to us—never a mere transcript of outline, or detail, or colour, but a subject carefully chosen, well thought out, enriched with its proper effect, heightened by appropriate and studied incident, the fulfilment of a definite purpose, the presentment of some phase of grandeur or beauty, discernible in its completeness only by and through the mind of the artist himself, and this so rendered as to suggest more even than it directly conveys. It is thus that he makes friends of those who are alike lovers of nature and of art. It is thus that he elicits from the most cultivated and the most uninstructed, a response alike in kind, though differing in degree. "His pictures" (writes his friend Mr. Hall, in a passage which, with some changes and additions may be added here)—

"His pictures have an honest, homely look about them, like a bundle of May flowers, or a cluster of daisies cut out of the greensward. They appeal to us like the familiar faces of old friends. They win their way to our hearts at once, refreshing as a breeze in summer. No one of them ever says to us, 'Now, look at me ! I am a miracle of art ! I address myself solely to an educated, highly cultivated taste, and none other can appreciate me. I am nature, idealised and perfected !' No ; but they say, one after another, 'I am that sweet green lane, down which you loved to stroll when a child, to pluck the blue-bells on the hedge-banks ; and the hawthorn bloom from the boughs that overhung your path. I am that breezy common you have often scoured across with your fellows, when the gorse was in full flower, and the gipsies were encamped amid the heather, and the windmill whirled its sails in the fresh gale, like a thing of life, and you were a boy, let out from school for a holiday, blithe as the lark that carolled above your head. I am that rocky stream, winding among the hills, and beneath the verdant screen of tangled branches, down which, rod in hand, you wandered for hours, when youth was growing into manhood, in search of spotted trout or silvery salmon, thinking of nothing to cast a cloud on your enjoyment, but rejoicing in health and a contented mind ! I am that delightful meadow, green as an emerald, dotted with browsing cattle and white-fleeced sheep, and spangled with buttercups and daisies, in which you often whiled away an hour at even-tide or early morn, in the pleasant days gone by, when life was opening like a fairy vision, and your heart was full of love and hope. I am that far-away blue hill you first beheld when you made your earliest excursion into dear old Wales, and which drew you, magnet-like, mile after mile, determined, though footsore and weary, to ascend its rugged slopes, and to stand ere sunset upon its lofty

summit. I am that long stretch of silvery sand, where you lingered, listening to the slow plunge of the far-off wave, or watching, hand in hand with some one near and dear, the graceful movement of the receding tide. I am that hoary mountain top, enshrouded in mist and storm, with here and there a gleam of sunlight, that reminded you as you breasted it, of the hard battle of life, the strong delight of resolute endurance, and the joy of conquest. And, last of the noble series, I am that quiet churchyard, with its quaint old church and venerable yews, where many a villager has passed before your eyes to his long sleep, and where you some day shall be carried to your own resting-place."

With this tribute, the truth of which all who know and feel his works will appreciate, we take farewell of a man who stands high, and in some respects foremost, in the great republic of Art; a man whom Birmingham is proud to have recognised, and to have numbered amongst her citizens; a man kindly, honest, simple, laborious; a great painter and a true poet—"dear old David Cox."

J. THACKRAY BUNCE.

JAMES PARSONS OF YORK.

ON the 26th of October, the city of York paid the last tribute of respect to one who was one of its most distinguished citizens, and, in the minds of the Congregationalists of the nation, had identified his name with that of the old metropolis of the North. True, he had not coveted nor received any special municipal distinctions nor even been accustomed to take public position, except such as was demanded from him by the duties of his ministry. True, also, that the character of the city had undergone a complete revolution during the half-century which passed between the time when James Parsons, then but a stripling, but a stripling who had already won popular attention by his striking oratory, became a minister of Christ among its people and the day when his long and his useful career was closed amid the demonstrations of affection and honour, not only from his own congregation but from a wide circle beyond. True, further, that the few years which he afterwards passed in retirement had done something in the whirl of excitement characteristic of this busy age to make him little more than a name to a considerable proportion of a population subject to continual flux and change. Still, the signs of respect shown as the funeral procession passed along the streets, and the crowds which assembled on the following Sunday to hear the Rev. Joshua C. Harrison describe the character and work of his old and valued friend, were an evidence that he was to the last what he had rejoiced to be through life, James Parsons of York. Perhaps the association was all the more intimate because outsiders could not under-

stand why the life-work of so powerful a preacher should have been restricted to so narrow a sphere. So far as Nonconformity was concerned, York certainly derived its importance from the fact that James Parsons was its minister. It must not be forgotten that York, as it was during more than the first half of his residence there, was a different place from what it is to-day. Now it is known as one of the centres of the railway systems, and though it has not grown so rapidly as some other places of a similar kind, it has ceased to be the quiet home of county respectability and ecclesiastical dignity which it was before railway enterprise made it the principal point on one of the main arteries of communication between London and Scotland, as well as the centre of other important lines of the great district around it. Our own recollection of it only extends to the time when the Congregational Union held its autumnal meetings there, but even then it was a place of but little stir and enterprise, though it was more populous, more active, and, to some extent, more under modern influences, than at the commencement of Mr. Parsons' career. Then, in 1822, it belonged to the past rather than to the present. It was known for its glorious Minster and the proud traditions which clustered round it, and the feelings and principles of its leaders were in harmony with its character and history. A strong element of Liberal feeling has always distinguished the great northern county, and the old hall at York has witnessed many proud triumphs of the Liberal party; but it is almost needless to say that, politics apart, the instincts of a people living under the shadow of a cathedral and largely dependent on the favour of the county gentry around, would necessarily be strongly Conservative. A Nonconformist minister settling in a place of this character could not have a very enviable position or a very brilliant prospect. We have to make yet another attempt to realise the state of things in that past before we can do full justice to the moral heroism shown by a young man, who might have commanded a very different sphere, when he resolved to accept the pastorate at York. In the last fifty years we have succeeded in altering the social position of Nonconformity, so that a minister called to labour now in a place whose conditions are parallel to those of York in 1822 would stand on a different platform. James Parsons, with all the popularity that he had won even as a student, boldly entered on a work in which there must have been many elements of discouragement, and, deaf to the various temptations which were addressed to him from time to time, remained there to the end, a distinguished example of self-sacrifice and pure loyalty to his sense of duty.

Whether this determination was a wise one for the denomination at large is not easy to pronounce. With our strong attachment to Mr.

Parsons and high appreciation of his great powers, we have sometimes pictured the possibilities of his course had he been a minister in the metropolis or one of our great provincial towns. Yet we can hardly desire that we should have been deprived of that beautiful manifestation of simplicity of spirit and singleness of aim which was given in this loyal constancy to the Church to whose work he at first gave himself. Our feelings might have been different if he had been exclusively James Parsons of York, and had not made himself the servant of the Churches throughout the country. No preacher of his standing whom we have been privileged to know ever regarded his great popular gifts more absolutely as a trust from God, to be used for the advancement of His truth as opportunity offered, than Mr. Parsons. In the days of his vigour he was ready to respond to every call for his service, though, of course, travelling was then less easy and luxurious than it is now, and even in his last years, after he retired from ordinary work, he was far too ready to forget considerations of health and strength, which would have been absolute with others, and to undertake preaching engagements to which he was physically unequal. It may be said that in this he was only obeying a strong natural impulse, and to some extent that is true, but instead of detracting from his honour it really adds to it. He loved to preach the Gospel, and it was that which made him so successful as a preacher. He felt "necessity laid upon him," and it was his joy to yield to it; and as he thus spoke out of deep feeling as well as intense conviction, his words had startling and impressive power. We have often heard the remark from those who heard him of late years—when, of course, the natural force of earlier days had abated—that the old fire was still there, and sometimes overcame all the hindrances of increasing bodily weakness. It was so because the fire itself had been kindled in the very depths of his nature, had ever been kept burning on the altar of his heart, and was ready to flash forth whenever occasion presented itself. This devotion to the service of Christ made him regardless of personal convenience when there was work to be done for Him. In the depths of winter, when he would rather have chosen the comfort of his home, he would make long journeys, possibly to preach a single sermon. The obligations under which he thus laid the churches cannot be easily forgotten, and those who knew how conscientiously the work was done, must appreciate it still more highly. We remember his telling us of a conversation he had with another distinguished preacher of his generation, who, partly from nervous reluctance and partly, perhaps, from a more severe pressure of duties at home, was less willing to yield to the applications for foreign service. Mr. Parsons was talking with him shortly after the early removal of the eloquent and gifted McAll of Manchester, and finding him strongly impressed with the event, his first

thought was to improve the opportunity, as the old preachers would have said, by urging on him the duty of giving himself more to the public work of the denomination. The appeal led the other to accept an engagement which he had been earnestly solicited to undertake: we fear that its effect soon passed away, and the one remained as slow to render such extraneous aid, at least to distant churches, as the other was prompt and willing. Both did eminent service, and we must not complain that each worked out his own ideal. But it is right to acknowledge the special work of this public kind which Mr. Parsons did, and in which, it may truly be said, no man of his day approached him, except the late Dr. Raffles of Liverpool.

If Mr. Parsons kept an extended diary, it must be rich in notices of eminent men and in sketches of remarkable events. He was a man of modest temper and retiring habits, but, nevertheless, he saw a great deal, carefully noted what he saw and heard, and appeared never to forget what he once noted. The keenness of his observation was equalled only by the retentiveness of his memory, and these two qualities would give extreme interest to any autobiographical record or chronicle of his interesting conversations. But as far as his own personal history was concerned, there can be comparatively little to record. His whole active life was, as we have seen, spent in York as a Congregational minister, and it is not to be supposed that it would be marked by great diversity, or include many startling incidents. There was but little to disturb the even tenor of his course, except his constant visits north and south, east and west, to serve his Master in connection with the churches to which he was so conscientiously and devotedly attached. The interest centres in the man himself and his work, and not in the surroundings or the events of his life.

This is all the more the case because, as we have sometimes heard it said, half in a tone of disparagement, he was "only a preacher." The statement is not to be disputed. He did not seek distinction nor take a prominent place in political work; he was "only a preacher." True, he added to this a kind of labour which a certain class at present are disposed to depreciate—work on committees and other service in the general interests of the denomination; and his remarkable sagacity and soundness of judgment made him eminently useful in this department. This, however, is a sphere in which little honour is to be reaped, and where a man must be thankful if he escapes without a good deal of odium. It remains still that he was distinguished "only as a preacher." But what an "only," especially when the preaching is like that of Mr. Parsons—conspicuous not merely for its artistic qualities, but for its passionate fervour, its apostolic spirit, its evangelical teaching, and its wonderful adaptation to produce spiritual results! When the pulpit is

made only a theatre for the display of individual gifts carefully cultivated for the purpose, and where its highest success is nothing more than a triumph of the speaker's own art, it may be admitted that it is a comparatively inferior distinction to be only a preacher. Even then it argues the possession of powers of no mean order. The man who can fairly take high rank as a pulpit orator, not in virtue of mere tact in catching the public ear and suiting the popular taste, but of a capacity to present truth in such a style as to instruct the intellect, elevate the feelings, refine the taste, and even move the sympathies, must have no common gifts. But when preaching is viewed not as an art but as a spiritual power, and genius and art are both converted into the handmaids of pure religious feeling and an ardent zeal for Christ and the salvation of souls, then, surely, the man who is able to develop its force in the fullest extent is entitled to the highest honour. Take such a case as that of James Parsons. What a multitude of hearts did he move, and move in the most powerful way, to a hatred of sin and a desire for goodness ! What deep, and in multitudes of instances abiding, impressions did he make by the vivid pictures and striking appeals he addressed to the heart and conscience under the influence of those "powers of the world to come," by which his own soul was so thoroughly possessed ! What a subduing influence did he continually exert by his glowing representations of that love of Christ to whose constraint he had yielded himself, and whose mighty power it was the one joy as well as business of his life to bring to bear upon the souls of others ! What a fund of consolation and help did he supply to distressed and sorrowing spirits, as with tender pathos he unfolded the promises or dwelt upon the bright hopes of the Gospel with a strength and earnestness which made his hearers feel how intensely real it all was to himself ! Those only who have conversed with some of those—and their name was legion—who had been brought under the spell of his eloquence, the power of which was derived from the spiritual fire by which it was kindled, can have an adequate idea of what he was and what he did, though "only a preacher."

As a preacher, Mr. Parsons had a marked and distinctive style of his own, which many have attempted to reproduce, but not often with effect. It was the outcome of the man himself. He had read largely, carefully studied some of the great masters of oratory, and placed before him an ideal of his own, to which he sought, by painstaking care and preparations, to rise. But amid all his commendable desire to have a true conception of his art and to realise it, he was always distinctively himself. The barrister seems to have been his model. First, there was the lucid exposition of his case ; then the minute and searching review of the evidence ; finally, the enforcement of the conclusion by stirring appeal. The Bible supplied him with the principal materials from which

he built up his argument. Never was a preacher more simply and fully scriptural. His habit was always to lay down great principles, which he sustained by a large induction of Biblical evidence, and then proceeded to work out with logical precision and apply with a singular rhetorical force. The neatness and precision which were so conspicuous in the preacher himself were equally developed in his discourses. Not only was the arrangement perfect as a piece of exposition, but the language in which his propositions were stated was equally terse and appropriate. It was the glowing passion and burning eloquence which marked the rhetorical passages of his discourses, for which the external appearance of the man served least to prepare the ordinary hearer. And yet, if he had observed more closely, he would have seen a bright twinkle in the eye, which told of power undeveloped in the quiet and methodical discussion of truth with which his sermons generally opened. Whether the weakness of his voice was really a disadvantage to him is a point open to doubt. It certainly had the effect of at once awing the audience into silence, of riveting attention and of securing a sympathy with one who was evidently struggling against such physical difficulties. The attention thus secured, he must have been an extremely dull hearer who did not soon recognise that he was listening to no common preacher, and as Mr. Parsons warmed with his theme until he reached his first climax—itself a preparation for those which were to follow—and the congregation were able for a moment to relax a rapt attention, the tension of which was becoming painful, there were few indeed who would not confess themselves under the magic power of a true orator. It has often been said that his style was artificial, and so to a great number of men it unquestionably would be. But with him it was not so. It was eminently artistic, for he had felt it a duty to cultivate his native gifts to the utmost; but artificial it was not. It was, in fact, the mould in which his thoughts and feelings were naturally cast. As a good steward, he sought to make the best of all that God had entrusted to him, but he was James Parsons still, as those must have felt most deeply who were brought the most intimately into fellowship with him. Of the extraordinary popularity of his preaching it is hardly necessary to speak. We have heard those who remember his visits to London, when he was yet a young man, tell of having had to go hours before the time of service, even on a week-day, and then finding, not only the spacious Tabernacle filled, but even the yard crowded with anxious expectants. Nor was the charm which drew those multitudes ever lost. The popularity could not be maintained at that high-water mark as the style became more familiar, or as the power of the preacher waned with age, or as a new generation with new tastes and new favourites rose. But to the last James Parsons was acknowledged, as he deserved to be acknowledged, to be one

of the greatest of modern preachers, and in his own line unrivalled, and, in fact, unapproached.

His theology was of the moderate Calvinist school, different undoubtedly from what may be found in some of our pulpits to-day, but substantially the same as what would still be regarded as Evangelical teaching. It is the fashion, in certain circles, to talk of his type of theological opinion as narrow and antiquated, if not obsolete, but it is quite possible that the next swing of the pendulum may show the fallacy of such statements. On one point it is not probable that the preaching of our churches will revert to that which was so characteristic of Mr. Parson's sermons. Some of his most startling effects were produced by his thrilling representations of the doom of the wicked. They were thus powerful, because to himself the doctrine on which they were based was so certain, and because they found an echo in the accusing and trembling consciences of his hearers. It would be extremely difficult to revive them now, at least in the same form, but there was a truth underlying these misrepresentations which is sure, sooner or later, to reassert itself with power. The "wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness," revealed not in the Book only, but, as the Apostle clearly intimates, in the consciences of men themselves. And however the Church may reject the old theories of eternal punishment, it is certain that this revelation cannot be obliterated. The thought and attention of the pulpit has been largely concentrated on the manifestation of the Divine Father and His love, and as a consequence the righteousness of God and the truths which flow from it have been thrown into the shade. But man will never be permanently satisfied with a theology so essentially one-sided. We do not fancy that reaction will carry us back to the idea of physical torment, but we entertain no doubt that more prominence will have to be given to the certainty and fearfulness of the retribution which awaits sin. That Mr. Parsons should mourn over what he could not but regard as the serious defections of the time, from his views on this question was only to be expected. Had he better understood the principles and aims of some of his brethren who have felt themselves compelled to abandon the old standpoint to which he so tenaciously clung, his anxiety might have been partially relieved, for he would have perceived that their change of position involved no abatement of their testimony as to the exceeding sinfulness of sin, no uncertainty in the proclamation of the Divine law with all its sanctions, least of all any disloyalty to the cardinal truth of the Gospel that through Christ only is there eternal life. But he certainly is not to be condemned if, at his time of life, approaching fourscore years, he was anxious about theological currents, which appeared to him to be drifting so many

away from the only safe anchorage. It would be almost unpardonable, on the other side, if younger men, trained amid other ideas, should speak slightly of so noble a man and his work, and forget, because of those inevitable differences of opinion, how much the Church owed to him and others of his school; how much they themselves owe to them for the gallant stand they made on behalf of the freedom under which they have been educated.

Of the charm of Mr. Parsons' private life those only can speak who were familiar with him. The writer's knowledge of him extends over many years, but he feels that though his opportunities of intercourse were many, they were only too rare for his own pleasure. The general results of them may be briefly stated. A more thoroughly transparent character it was hardly possible to find. A beautiful and childlike simplicity, which made him responsive to every act of kindness, and enabled him to derive pleasure from the most familiar scenes and pursuits, was peculiarly characteristic of him. He was a sincere, loyal, sympathetic friend, and to none more than to his brethren in the ministry, especially to the younger ones. The writer has had such experience of this kindness, both to himself in the first years of his ministry, and to his son, when preparing for the same great work, that he would be untrue to all the feelings of his own heart if he did not here gratefully acknowledge services of which he will ever retain a pleasant remembrance. His conversation, especially at times when the mind was free from the anxiety of an approaching duty, sparkled with life and humour. His memory was stored with striking anecdotes, recollections of quaint characters and curious incidents, wise and pithy sayings. While he was the soul of kindness, there was at times a mischievous humour which could very effectually dispose of any pretentiousness or assumption. A Presbyterian minister in a northern town, who was the very incarnation of egotism and childish conceit, which ultimately led him into the National Church, had been present at a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, where he had spoken, and been pleasantly complimented by Dr. Winter Hamilton. On his return home his first business was to button-hole everyone with whom he could claim acquaintance and tell him of the speech and the compliment. It happened that Mr. Parsons was preaching in the town, and the worthy minister, making his way into the vestry after service, immediately began: "I saw you, Mr. Parsons, at the Alliance meeting." "Yes, yes!" was the reply, and those who noticed the well-known twinkle of the eye felt sure that something was coming; "I was there, but—I did not hear your speech." The effect was complete, and was the more remarkable because Mr. Parsons had heard nothing of the way in which

the good man had been talking of his performance, and was guided entirely by his insight into his character.

That Mr. Parsons had so rich a fund of quiet humour will hardly be understood by those who saw him only in public, and especially in the pulpit. There it was absolutely suppressed, and a solemn and earnest gravity marked all the utterances of the speaker. It may be said that no one entered the pulpit with a deeper sense of his responsibility and with a more anxious care to use the opportunity for the glory of God. This feeling, acting on an extremely nervous temperament, rendered any approach to humour impossible; and, indeed, it would have been out of place in sermons of his type. But we do not suppose he was ever tempted to such indulgence. It was different on the platform. His speeches, indeed, were too rare, but they were always interesting and effective, and occasionally there were in them some of those clever and telling hits to which his friends were accustomed in private intercourse. Those who remember the Union Meetings of years ago may recall some of these sallies of wit, which had a considerable effect at the time, and all the more because of their contrast with the extremely sober aspect of the speaker, whose eye alone indicated his participation in the feeling which he had produced in the assembly. It is right to add that there was never the most remote approach to ill-nature or even severity. His spiring was always of the gentlest, and it was done in so kindly a spirit that it was impossible to resent it. Nor, indeed, would he hesitate to give a good story, even though it seemed to tell against himself. For example, he used to relate with great gusto an account of a very ludicrous incident which occurred on one of his visits to Doncaster, during the old coaching days. Those who have not lived in the district can hardly understand how "horsey" is the atmosphere, and how natural it seems to a considerable class that everyone should have an interest in racing and kindred sports and the betting to which they lead. Thus a gentleman, riding on the box-seat from Knaresborough to Harrogate, happened to venture an opinion as to the distance between the places different from that of the driver, and was at once met by the inquiry, "What will you bet?" On replying that he did not bet at all, the driver somewhat contemptuously observed, "I think nothing of gentlemen that won't back their opinions." The man was one of a class not inconsiderable in the region, which is intensely interested in "sporting life," and fancies that other people must share its excitement. One of this type happened to be Mr. Parson's companion in the coach, and as they drew near Doncaster, pulled out his watch, and exclaimed with evident satisfaction, "Ah, we shall be in time yet." "In time," said Mr. Parsons; "in time for what?" "The Sellinger (St. Leger) of course. But perhaps you are not a racing man?" "I never was at a

race in my life." "I thought not. You are like myself, I dare say: I like a good cock-fight better, any day." The idea of a reverend divine, and one whose whole appearance was that of a Puritan preacher of a rather severe type, being mistaken for a sporting character, whose aversion to horse-racing meant only a preference for cock-fighting, was sufficiently ludicrous, and no one enjoyed the joke more than its subject himself.

Mr. Parsons was what may fairly be described as a "religious Dissenter." His taste did not incline him to political activity, though he had decided opinions and a considerable range of political and historical knowledge. Like most of the Congregational leaders of the day, he was a Whig, and had a profound sense of the services which that party had rendered to the State. It is a curious fact, remembering the feeling which men of his school and his generation had for the Whigs, that the first serious breach between the old allies was caused by the action of those who are generally regarded as the moderate party among the Dissenters. Mr. Edward Baines was the leader of the first Nonconformist revolt against Whig leadership in 1846, and Mr. Parsons shared his opinions on the Education question. In more recent controversies he took no part, though never ceasing to feel a keen interest in everything relating to Nonconformist progress. He never faltered in his faith in the principles of political Dissent, though he did not throw himself into its conflicts. In loyalty to his denomination, and in active sympathy with all its institutions and movements, he was an example to all. A more thorough-going and conscientious Independent there could not be. He was ready, indeed, to serve all Christian churches, and often did so in his later years at the cost of personal exhaustion and suffering, but he never allowed his catholicity to weaken his attachment to the churches with whom he had deliberately chosen to cast in his lot. He was an Independent, too, of the old Puritan type, and though he acquiesced in the innovations which have been made in our modes of worship, he liked them as little as the changes which have crept into our forms of theological expression. There was much of the Conservative instinct about him, but it was a Conservatism of a fine temper and generous feeling. He would have retained all the spirit, and would have changed but little of the form, of that old Dissent of which he was himself so distinguished a type. Those who fancy that the comprehension of Dissenters in the National Church might have been possible but for the views of the extreme men who have agitated for Disestablishment, might have learned from him the vanity of such anticipations. He could not be reckoned among political Dissenters, and yet he would have resisted any suggestion of reconciliation to an Established Church as stoutly as the most resolute of

them. His objections to the existing Church on doctrinal grounds were as strong as theirs, and his dislike of the liturgy, and the system of which it is representative, even more decided. Churchmen may tolerate this kind of religious Dissent, but it is a formidable antagonist to their Establishment.

Mr. Parsons was not taken away until his work was done. He was gathered at a good old age into the garner as "a shock of corn cometh in his season," but though he outlived most of the companions of his youth and manhood, he has left behind him numbers who will long continue to cherish his memory with loving reverence. The age differs greatly in many of its characteristics from that in which the principal part of his work was done, and needs another kind of service. Not the less do we feel that if James Parsons was beginning his career to-day, having felt the influences of the new period just as he was touched and stirred by those of the old, he would have done as noble a work, and occupied as distinguished a position. It is very common to say of such men that they would not attain the same eminence if they had to win it now. There is a great fallacy underlying such talk. Of course they would not if they were precisely the same themselves. But this is exactly what could not be. They would have been educated amid the surroundings of the present, not the past, and their character and powers would have been developed accordingly. It would doubtless have been so with the subject of this sketch; and we can only desire for the Church that God may grant it in these days men of the same purity of aim, the same fidelity to principle, the same willingness to sacrifice ease or interest to duty, and, united with these, the same great powers as a preacher as James Parsons.

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE MONTH.

IT must surely have occurred to some of the clergy who listened to the extraordinary outburst of Sir Charles Anderson at the Lincoln Conference, that the development of such a spirit as that displayed in his speech was one evil result of the struggle in which they were engaged. This is political Churchmanship with a vengeance, and it was hardly improved by the unctuous exhortation and the unnecessary confession with which Sir Charles closed his speech: "Let me ask you (*and I speak as one who has grievously neglected the duty myself*) to offer up frequent and earnest prayers for our legislators." It is to be hoped that the first blessing asked by this vehement gentleman, for himself as well as for our legislature, may be the divine gift of charity. Happily, there were voices of a different character heard even in the Lincoln Conference.

Rev. T. W. Mossman told it, that "*we should learn to treat the Non-conformists as Christian brethren, and not be separated from them in life and death by an Act of Parliament.*" Rev. J. P. MacCallan insisted on a forgotten truth that "*the real desecration of a churchyard was when a Christian Service was said over one who in life rejected the Christian faith.*" Men of a like mind were found in other Diocesan Conferences, and it is evident that the spirit of justice, as well as of true Christian brotherhood, is leading many Churchmen to approach the subject in a very different temper from that which the great body of the clergy manifest. With the clerical body there is still no yielding, and the Government are warned on every possible occasion, that if there be any yielding, any favour to what the Rev. W. Mathews at the Carlisle Conference called "a sweeping act of confiscation of the property of the Church, which her own Primate *was abetting, 1,300 clergymen will know the reason why.*" The Bishop of Ely, in his Primary charge, has thrown out a new idea of compromise. It is not very promising, but it indicates not only a consciousness that there is a difficulty to be faced and overcome, but also a clearer and broader view of the question than even high ecclesiastical dignitaries sometimes take. With him there is none of the bluster and insult in which a political partisan like Sir Charles Anderson indulges. He objects to what he describes as "communising the churchyards," not because it would be an infringement of the temporal rights of the clergy—for he frankly confesses that these cannot be maintained in opposition to the manifest requirements of the nation—"but because important and far-reaching ecclesiastical principles are at stake, principles involving, as we believe, the whole status of the Church in this country." In order to end this strife about the burial grounds, his Lordship recommends, therefore, the adoption of the cemetery system. He would have cemeteries without chapels and without a division into consecrated and unconsecrated parts. The practical result would be that the contest would end in a drawn battle, the churchyards would be closed, and public cemeteries would be established, where the only services would be those at the side of the grave, and where Churchmen and Dissenters would be laid together without division. The proposals came too late, and at any time would hardly have been practicable. But we must do justice to the Catholic spirit of the Bishop, as shown in the following words, so different from much that we have heard. Speaking in favour of abolishing the distinction between consecrated and unconsecrated ground, he says: "I should prefer to fall back upon the principle of holding each separate grave to be hallowed, so far as holiness can be imparted to unconscious things, by the words of prayer with which the remains of the baptized member of Christ's Body are consigned to it. We should thus avoid any breaking up of the family burial-place in the case of a difference of creed amongst those near of

kin, and we should refute the charge, that in resisting the intrusion of irregular ministrations into the churchyard, Churchmen are actuated by the idea that the burial of the Nonconformist with his own religious rites can in any sense desecrate holy ground." Before the charge can be refuted, the Bishop will have to convert many of his own Church friends to his Christian view, but when such a manly and liberal utterance comes from a High Church Bishop, it is clear that, despite all our controversies, there is a growth of true charity. It has not been hindered by the bold avowal of principles and the firm contention for rights on the part of Dissenters, and it certainly will not be promoted by the revival of the namby-pamby style which was prevalent a few years ago. Dissenters do not like those Churchmen least who boldly maintain their own principles, though they be the highest of the High, and they may be sure that the same feeling prevails in the opposite camp. Manly foes can always respect one another. It is only those who are anxious first of all to have a secure position of their own, and who, like that army in the crisis of the fight which placed the Tudors on the throne, hold aloof till victory declares itself on one side or the other, who are in continual perplexity, and are for ever irritating others, their friends as well as their foes.

Mr. Bright has been having rather a lively time with the Bishops. In a speech at Rochdale, with the old ring of earnestness and strength so characteristic of the man, and an eloquence worthy even of his palmy days, he boldly attacked the Established Church, and among other illustrations of its baneful influence, pointed to a speech of the new Bishop of Truro, and the intimation it gave of his purpose to suppress Dissent. Two or three days passed, and then a "member of the Conference" at which the speech was delivered, interposed to throw his shield over his diocesan, and to state that though the reporter had condensed his powerful address into an exhortation to "combat Dissent with its own weapons," yet the printed copy of the address contained no such expression, nor any other indication of the feeling attributed to Dr. Benson. The next day came a still more emphatic repudiation of the statement from the Bishop himself, and that was followed by a manly letter from Mr. Bright, making the *amende honorable* in a way which ought to have ended the controversy, and which appeared to us far beyond anything which justice or courtesy required. It has been followed, however, by a series of homilies from a class of writers who are eager to prove their own wisdom and moderation by administering chastisement to an extreme man like Mr. Bright, "who is becoming, don't you know, quite an agitator again." As such a cry is taken up all too readily, it may be as well to make two or three comments on the whole affair.

First, let it be observed, that there was really nothing so improbable

in the report, as Mr. Bright read it in common with thousands of others, as to make him hesitate to accept it. All the world knows that new Bishoprics are established not only for the good of Churchmen, but in the hope that some stray Dissenters may be recovered, and we are greatly mistaken if the erection of this new Cornish see has not been advocated on the ground of the necessity for some counterpoise to the overwhelming influence of Dissent in the county. It may be that it was extremely unlikely that Dr. Benson would be the man to initiate such a policy. He may be so Broad and Liberal as to justify the Cornish mayor who, according to a story which is current just now, proposed his health in the following remarkable manner: "The Bishop of our new diocese, and other Dissenting ministers." But Mr. Bright is surely not to be blamed because he was ignorant of this feature in his character, and not prepared, therefore, to pronounce it incredible that he could ever have made the speech as reported. But, further, whatever the actual intention of the Bishop, there can be no doubt that the impression made on the mind of the reporter was that he had come in an aggressive spirit and had directed his clergy and their supporters to "combat Dissent with its own weapons." But, what is most curious of all, nothing was done in the way of contradiction until Mr. Bright had spoken. The address was given on October 25th, and the first sketch appeared in the London papers within a day or two. We learn from the Bishop's friend that "next day I had the honour of a conversation with him, in which he expressed his pain at the way in which that local paper had represented him, and prophesied that fault would be found with him on the strength of it." But why, we ask, not have sent a few lines to the *Times* to point out the error, and so anticipate and avert the censure? It is really too bad after this to be so hard upon Mr. Bright for expressing the condemnation which the Bishop and his friend expected, and which the latter says, "would have been deserved" had he so spoken. It must be borne in mind that ten days elapsed between the report and Mr. Bright's speech. As no definite contradiction had appeared, he is not to blame for accepting the report as correct. If, indeed, it was a thing so new and incredible that a Bishop should seek to put down Dissent, Mr. Bright might be blamed for giving such ready credence to a statement so monstrous in itself. But another prelate has subsequently entered the field against the great popular orator, and certainly if the Bishop has not succeeded in overcoming his adversary, it has not been either from want of strong feeling, or from a reluctance to employ strong language. But Dr. Magee, with all the vehemence of his passion and the glitter of his rhetoric, is as unequal to Mr. Bright in true oratorical power as in moral weight. The Bishop, who has made such mournful confessions as to the position in which the system of patronage placed him, and has nevertheless been content to acquiesce in the defeat

of his own proposals for remedying the evil, and who is a champion of the Establishment for which the very system which he denounces so eloquently, though he is compelled to carry it out in practice, is a buttress, is hardly the man who should undertake to assail a man of John Bright's calibre. It is worth while, however, to note his statements :

" However, he did venture upon the present occasion to give, with Mr. Bright's good leave, a short charge in anticipation to the clergyman who might come to that new parish, and he hoped that he would not unduly offend Mr. Bright if he said that, while he charged the clergyman to be faithful in all the duties of his office, remembering that, as a member of a National Church, he was the servant of all, he did express the hope—and he would not be an honest man if he did not express the hope—that he might so minister in that place as that he might win back to the Church of their fathers many of those who were now alien from it. He could not see why it should offend even the most bigoted—or, as he preferred to say, the most strongly hostile—of Dissenters, if they were bent upon winning by all fair, kindly, and Christian means those who differed from them in their faith. Yet that was such a dire offence in Mr. Bright's eyes, that he charged those who did it with preferring their Church to Christianity."

It would be impossible to discuss here whether Mr. Bright or the Bishop is right. Our point simply is that Dr. Magee glories in the very thing about which Dr. Benson was so deeply wounded when it was attributed to him by the Member for Birmingham. Of course, there may have to be a correction of the report, which has not yet been supplied. But, assuming this to be a true version of the Bishop of Peterborough's speech, we shall wait with some little anxiety to see whether the critics, who were so ready to censure Mr. Bright for speaking such evil about a Bishop, will be equally ready to condemn a Bishop when he speaks such evil himself. We are bound to say, however, that Dr. Magee gives the truest representation of the Establishment and its mission. So long as Dissent exists in the land, the work of the Establishment must be one of proselytism. Every Dissenting Church, and indeed every Dissenter, interferes with the idea of a National Church, and a Bishop who desires to be in reality what the law constitutes him in theory, the spiritual ruler of the diocese, and not merely of a sect of Episcopalians within it, must naturally desire to get rid of Dissent. The wiser and, we must add, the more Christian the prelate, the more ready will he be to accept the situation as it is, and work in harmony with Dissenters for the glory of Him whom both desire to serve, but in doing so, he gives up the *raison d'être* of the Establishment, and practically confesses that it has given up all hope of becoming the Church of the nation. To this everything is tending, and those who resist this tendency, like the Bishop of Peterborough, are really strengthening it by helping the world to see how odious are the claims which an Establishment puts forth.

The Marquis of Hartington's speech marks an epoch in the history of Disestablishment. It does not mean that the Liberal party is going to make religious equality a "plank" inch platform, or even that those grievances about which the noble Marquis feels so keenly, under which the "Free and Dissenting" Churches in Scotland are suffering, are to be immediately redressed, or that England is soon to be the only part of the United Kingdom in which an Establishment is to be left standing. But, while we take very moderate views as to the immediate consequences of his declaration, we do not therefore attach to it the less importance. It is something to find that our political chiefs recognise the necessity of having a platform at all, and still more that one of them sees that it will not do to have in it only the two planks which Mr. Forster magnified so unduly at Bristol, the extension of the county franchise, and the establishment of county boards, not even though they be supplemented by some instalment of reform in the land laws. It is much that a Liberal peer has been brought to see that an Established Church is a grievance when the majority of the people are Dissenters, and we may reasonably hope, as his education in ecclesiastical politics proceeds, he will some day come to see that the Establishment may be a greater grievance where it has a majority, though a small one, but where the arrogance of the priests makes it more intolerable to Nonconformists. If this were all that we gained by the Marquis's speech it would be no contemptible advantage, especially as we are in no hurry to hasten the settlement of the question unduly. We have such faith in his principles that we have no desire to make haste. Our opponents seem to fancy that we expect to carry the position after the fashion in which the Russians stormed Kars, whereas, we are content to adopt the slow process of a regular siege. We quite understand that our work is of an educational character, and we do not desire it should be anything else until the public mind is so leavened with our principles that the change will be welcomed by the whole nation as an equitable reform. We hail the speech of the Liberal leader as a sign of decided progress, not at all as the beginning of the end. Very much has to be done before we reach that, but we hope that we have learned both to labour and to wait. Even the Scottish Establishment, weak as it may appear, and incapable of logical defence on any of the grounds which the champions of National Churches ordinarily take up, may not be so easily overthrown as some fancy. It may be hard for the Churchmen in this country to rally to its cause, considering that it is a Presbyterian Church, and that Episcopalians are among the Dissenters, but they will have no alternative. "*Proximus Ucalegon ardet*," and it is surely better to stamp out the conflagration when a neighbour's house is in flames than to wait till it extends to our own. We anticipate, therefore, that there will be a sharp conflict round the outwork, whose defence is

essential to the retention of the fortress. No one can doubt that the relation between the two establishments is so intimate, that the fall of the one must tell severely upon the fortunes of the other. It is very well for Canon Curteis to contend for Home Rule in these ecclesiastical matters, but it simply cannot be. Ireland has no National Church, and if that of Scotland be overthrown, will it be tolerable that English Nonconformists alone should bear the badge of social inferiority? All this is clearly seen, and we must be prepared to encounter a vigorous defence of the Scottish establishment. The question will arise, however, What real force can be wielded by the defenders, when so many of them have this heart in the cause?

BOOKS ON THE TABLE.

Nine Lectures on Preaching., By R. W. Dale, M.A. (London: Hodder and Stoughton.) It is one of the last, and certainly one of the pleasantest, duties devolving on me as *locum tenens* for the Editor during his temporary absence in America for the delivery at Yale College of this course of lectures on preaching, to introduce this volume to our readers. It would be out of taste to attempt here either criticism or eulogy, and as I could not pretend to discuss the merits of the book with impartiality, I should have been about the last person to undertake such a task, had this been necessary. All that I venture to do is to chronicle the publication of the book, and note some of its principal characteristics. A contemporary has described it as a "brilliant" series of lectures, and this is undoubtedly true; but the use of this epithet must not so mislead as to make us overlook the more solid qualities of the work. It has been prepared with care, and evidently gives the results of wide reading and large and varied experience. While, therefore, there are many passages of exquisite beauty and great rhetorical power, it is specially valuable to ministers and students for its sound practical judgment and useful suggestions. The subject is old enough, but the lecturer has invested it with a rare amount of freshness, and this is the result largely of the air of reality which surrounds the whole. It is the production of one whose work is his passion, and who has spared no effort to secure the highest kind of success; and who interests and instructs others because he speaks of that which he has himself tasted and felt and handled. But I will not trust myself to expatiate on the excellences of a book which is sure at once to make for itself a high reputation. It will be most valued, perhaps, by the classes for which it was primarily designed; but I have little doubt that it will be prized by the people as well as their teachers.

J. G. R.

